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The eschatological economy

Knight, Douglas H

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The Eschatological Economy.

An enquiry into the doctrine of eschatology and the coming into being of the community of God's election, and the relationship of these doctrines to the concepts of body, time, sacrifice and action and other mediatory resources for a Trinitarian theology of persons in constitutive relation and theological response to modernity.

Douglas Hugh Knight

King's College London

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Abstract

This thesis argues that theology follows the address of God to the world in requiring complexity and in providing it. It contrasts the economy of eschatological theology with the protological economy of modernity. It argues that theology must begin with talk of God, go on to talk about the world, and return to talk about God as the future of the world. Theology offers an account of man and his act that requires and initiates conversations with philosophy and history. It disputes the claim of the autonomous discourses of modernity, claims an interest in their subject matter, tells their history, and promotes a continuing conversation with them. The complexity of the theological account is provided by a complex account of time, for which eschatology is the concept. This demands that we distinguish an account of being from an account of becoming, and that we distinguish between God's time for us, and the time we presently know and impose on one another. Theology is concerned to establish the possibility of freedom. It must therefore provide an account of persons that argues that persons may come into being in relationship with God, but presently, and outside this relationship, have neither freedom nor any stable being. I offer an account of time that ties time more closely into the action of God and of man. The thesis will argue that Christian theology requires a doctrine of the becoming holy of Israel, the people of God. In dialogue with biblical studies, it will examine the concept of sacrifice as the conceptuality for this action that, in Israel, man learns to exercise with God. To put the emphasis on action I have employed the term economy. I argue that man comes into a work which he may exercise freely under God. I ask whether modern theology provides an account of the oneness of God with his work – a pneumatology – and with it an adequate account of the coming into being of a new creature in a new economy of action.

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Introduction

This thesis contrasts the eschatological economy of theology with the protological economy of modernity. It contrasts the speech of God with the speech of the world to show that the latter is brought into an obedient and subordinate position under the former. It sets out a theological account of the world that is identified, challenged and transformed by this address of God and from which it will receive a new being, work and place. It argues that an account of God's action requires an account not only in which God speaks, but in which God is the first hearer of his word and the means of his speaking and this answering. God intends that we become the second hearer and respondent of his word, and that our speech comes to participate in his. God's address to the world transforms it into his new creation and creature. But this speaking and transformation is not without resistance, for another entity attempts to intercept the speech of God, to take it from God and employ it to other ends. This thesis insists that an account of the address of God to man must include an account of the resistance this address receives, and of the overcoming of that resistance.

The economy of modernity intends to make itself the receiver of the word of God and so an usurper and opponent of it. It claims that the word of God becomes the many words of the world, so that in Western history, theological speech has given way to worldly and secular talk. This thesis offers an account of the resistance to the gospel, and of the word's overcoming of that resistance. The world, in the single hypostasis of Christ and the community he gathers, gives the answering word that the Father recognises as his own word returning to him. This thesis contrasts the modern understanding of being as that which underlies and causes all that is, with an eschatology, to show that this

protology does not succeed in holding out against the word of God, but is itself transformed and established by the eschatological action of this word.

In the course of its talk about God, theology needs to talk about the world and modernity, and then return to talk about God. Theology must say something about the reality and time of the world. This is not a matter of simply saying what the world *is*. The world is not a settled thing, but many contesting words and counter-words. Theology's task is not to accept the world's own claims, but to contradict it and tell it what it is and may be in the determination of God. By contrasting the action of God with the action of modernity we establish that one has a coming reality and the other a fading reality, that the second is already made powerless by the first, but will also be given new being and employment by it. This thesis intends to talk about the world as varieties of action, some as self-defeating and so as failure of action. I shall call a field of action, an economy. An account of the oneness of the work of God requires two accounts of the work of God, one an account of God's election of a people, and another of the processes of the training and sanctification of that people - an account of being, and an account of becoming. While the Western philosophical and theological tradition understands modern society to be the function of a single time that is moving towards a unity, this thesis suggests that it is the task of theology to refute this protological claim by showing that the freedom of man is not the presupposition of his being, but the outcome of his history with God. Man *becomes* free. Man is brought up into his place and task by the action of God who, by denying reinforcement to options that do not lead to this outcome, draws him into the full freedom of the creature of God. God creates and forms for man an agency and freedom that man will exercise with God together, and provides the medium within which man may come into that freedom. God has chosen a people to be that medium. This people will become the labourer in God's creation who will bring to it the freedom God intends for it. Their worship of God in Israel's cult represents the taking up of that task. This thesis therefore also suggests that the realm of thought and of the university, must be a thinking about *action*, the action of the *world*, and therefore is a therapeutic service of commentary on the world for its sake, and is thus a liberating and evangelical work.

The thesis sets out an account of resistance to the gospel which the non-modern Christian tradition has conceptualised as the bondage of the will, hardening of hearts, or rule of the principalities and powers. Theology must provide an account of the multiplex character of will, of the complex covenants and complicity of human being. Theology

must argue that the individual does not yet have a single mind and will. What being this mind and will may have cannot yet be known by us. This thesis therefore attempts to provide an account in which man is not already the agent, with one mind and set of desires and purposes. It argues that theology must identify modern and Kantian anthropology as premature. A theological anthropology must sustain a sense of struggle the outcome of which is not yet known. Will man appear finally at the end of the story, or will other logics and entities prevail over man?

Talk about the one economy of the God, who is God for man, and will in his own time be God with man, requires identification of two economies, one of being and one of becoming. Theology requires these two parallel accounts, of being and of time. The latter may not be reduced to the former. Time may not be ruled out of any account of what is. Rather the question of what time it has and can sustain must continually be put to all that is. It is the task of the Christian community to say that there is no final statement about this world that can yet be made.

This thesis discusses the economy of modernity under both terms. The economy of modernity claims to be an economy of *being* purely, and not of *becoming and passing away* again. The economy of modernity presents itself as the two economies of nature and freedom which make a single economy of *being*. I will argue that the coming together of these two economies is not the implementation of its unity that the economy of modernity takes it to be, because they just collapse into one protological economy of nature that cannot support persons, sociality or freedom. The economy of public and political speech and encounter has become the internal economy of individualism of desires that neither derive from public discourse, nor sustain or promote it. The economy of modernity claims to have been brought together by history, but to be no longer subject to time. I argue that this economy cannot secure itself against the time imposed on it by God. The word of God identifies Western being as a failure of action and thus as a failure of being. We may not yet know whether the outcome of this history will be the emergence of man. The outcome is unknown other than as *theological* knowledge of the resurrection and emergence of the one man to the side of God.

The argument of the thesis.

The first chapter sets out a theory of persons in constitutive relationship. The concept of person prevents the reduction of the person to *being*, nature or will. What is unfree does not form the basis of what is free. The work of each creature is the being-and-freedom of

all other creatures. Freedom results from an active and ongoing relationship of creature with Creator. An account of man must therefore include an account of the place and work into which he is to grow, of the co-labour of creation as (1) task (2) product and (3) ongoing act. The perfection of creation is dependent on the finished and perfected *freedom* and personhood of man. Freedom is not what man presently has, but is what will result from God's determination not to cease from his work until that freedom has been reached. The freedom of man is the task of God, and the task into which man is introduced by God.

The second chapter offers an account of the coming into being of the holy community. This account is given in terms of learning. *Learning* accounts for the relationship between Israel's elect *being* and her holy *becoming*. It relates the doctrine of sanctification to training, law and to time. It shows that the secular concept of history intends to open a gap between God and his action, to take God's action out of his hands to form a secular history. Israel, however, keeps narrative in conversation with law, each disciplining the other, which allows Israel to refuse this foreign secular history along with all such concepts of nature and fate. God fashions for himself a people. This fashioning includes his own commentary on this intrinsically linguistic work. I argue that we need to make explicit the schemas and cosmology of modernity; each schema should be under the control of all the others, so none predominates. They must not be collapsed into a simple contrast of interiority and exteriority, mind and world, that has resulted in the predominance of issues of truth and epistemology over those of performance and formation. We are in an economy of complex reciprocity of voluntary and involuntary action which we enforce on others, and oblige others to enforce on us, which makes problematic particularity and plurality.

The third chapter argues that the doctrine of the trinity does not allow us to separate God from his work, either from his activity, or from its result. This grammar of God's work is not the function of an independent logic, by which God could be called to account for his work in terms not of his own making. God's election of a people is the beginning of his speech and action for, and to, his creature. God elects a new Adam who, setting his hand on the head of the creature, supplies what it lacks, so it no longer lacks anything. God is speaker and listener, commander and obeyer, judge and amongst those judged. He is also the means of this speaking and listening, commanding and obeying, and the language spoken, the medium shared and judgement made. The chapter relates the doctrines of creation and reconciliation and anthropology with an account of

the worship of Israel as the paideutic work that forms a holy people who may obediently receive the earth as creation. For Israel-theology and creation-theology to support each other would involve a recovery of a non-modern dogmatic theology in which the creature and creation become (subordinate) actors. A trinitarian and Irenaean view of Israel's anthropology sets man in a single symbiotic ecosystem with the creation of which he is member, mediator and climax. Man is hosted by God and brought up by him into the practice of God's hospitality. This relationship of man to world is made visible by the act of sacrifice in which man's hand is set on the creation in the form of the animal. This event is not a one-time, episodic or mechanical mode, but the whole relationship of man in the world in obedience. The elect and baptised community learns this relationship by being brought up in the conceptuality of sin and righteousness. In her political cosmology Israel understands herself to be mandated by God to rule his creation with him. Adam is set over creation as its lord, and Israel is Adam-in-waiting. By her action Israel transforms what we do from our estimation of it, to God's estimation of it. Israel undoes the alternative creation of old Adam, and re-binds it into the living and lasting creation of God. Israel deconstructs the myth of the single agent in combat with his fate. That the Father and Son share a single action, means that the Son is able to face and oppose the world, to copy and imitate it, and so in gathering it up and re-playing it, to transform and redeem it.

The fourth chapter argues that as creation the world is the medium in which we are presented to the Son and, in him, made present to each other. We are to be joined in the person of the Son by discovering the character of the Son (law) by rehearsing the actions of the Son (gospel). There is world and place, role and office for us. The Holy Spirit supplies the medium and language in which we can be given to the Son, and adopts all creation as the medium within which he gives us the being of the Son. The Spirit is the medium of finitude into which baptism transfers us. We are baptised into the new environment brought into being by the meeting of God and man on the cross. The God-man who is with God releases the Spirit to alter our environment. He acts on us, without trespassing against our integrity, to produce that transforming switch-work by which the greater freedom-reproducing capability of the Spirit is settled upon his people. The Holy Spirit supplies the biological and material modalities by which he will establish us as members of the Son and bring us to the Father. The Spirit creates our increased embodiment, not disembodiment. I review a selection of biblical and systematic scholarship in search of a conceptuality in which to say that this nation *becomes* holy, and,

in response to this scholarship, sketch an Adam theology in which man has a place and a task, and in them, a new action and freedom.

The fifth chapter points to the responsibilities of theology and so to the range of audiences and conversations which theology should engage. I ask what is at stake in accounts of the disappearance of theological accounts of mediation, of the secularisation of the West and arrival of modernity. I suggest these are narratives of the fall, but that unless related to some concept of *paideia* they are just stories. I attempt to arbitrate between accounts of secularisation. I examine accounts of the changing ontology and epistemology that made God one being amongst others, and removed the need for the scriptural and liturgical mediation of theological knowledge and the training of the community that could acquire it. I consider accounts of the seventeenth century divorce of nature and culture, body and action, the changing concept of religion, cultivation of interiority and story of the disenchantment of the world. I argue that theological discourse must include an account of the medium in which the theological account is rendered, and that under a number of definitions the public and political world must be that medium. For much of the theological tradition Aristotle conveniently provided the complex conceptuality for this account. From the seventeenth century this gave way to a simpler conceptuality that made difficult any discussion of man as creature nested in nature or as work in progress. I argue that we must nevertheless provide such a complex account.

In the final chapter I argue that, though it has no knowledge of it, the world is already commandeered and re-employed to bring us to God. It is the economy we think we are able to hold closed against God, but in which God encloses us. The closed economy is a function of the open economy. God provides the boundaries and structures, and commandeers the structures and discourses of the world to be this medium to us. He moves back the boundaries as the sanctified community becomes ready for them. Each economy is an economy of cause, but it is driven by an economy of participation, the continuity and faithfulness of God's determination and action for us. The triune God releases us from all rival powers and from the protological economy that we know as the unified economy of Western time. The trinity is not only a doctrine about God, but a rule about how to talk about the God who in the course of addressing himself and corresponding to himself, addresses the world, defeats his rivals and gives the world his own speech. It is a rule for talk about ourselves that corresponds to our future as his creatures, as those can talk about him because they have been not only

addressed by him but won by him and taught by him. The doctrine of the trinity is our means of talking about the One and the Many, and oneness and plurality as such, without putting one before the other. It requires the giving of two forms of account at once, one in terms of *being* - an eschatological account - and the other in terms of *becoming* - an account of the *work* of this eschatological being. It is the grammar that corresponds to what God does and in our time *has still to do*, a practice that must be learned, and it is the practice of the particular community to which he gives it.

Accounting for newness requires, as we shall see, a concept of plural agency. A trinitarian eschatology is the grammar of plurality. By it persons, and within the relationships of persons, the world of things, may *become*, so that there is not merely a repetition and representation of what was, but a new thing. We cannot lay out such a grammar of plural agency before us to see it all at once, for it is not the function of our action alone, but also the means by which we *are acted on*, and changed from a simpler to a more complex grammar of action. It is not therefore our time that lays out this grammar, but rather this grammar of the action of God that lays time out for us. It is plural in that it allows for and opens the freedom of *two* parties, God *and man*, man *and God*. By the trinitarian conceptuality of eschatology, freedom is described not as an anomalous local breakdown of necessity, but as incremental under the rule of God. It is not as if the gods may be wilful and free, and man unfreely subject to them, or that man may work out the period of his tutelage to the powers, slowly freeing himself and harnessing them. It is that God and Man may be *together* free, *both* free, and that this is the work of God who does something new.

Chapter 1

Persons

1.1 Theology as address to the world.

This thesis points to the responsibilities of theology and so to the range of audiences and conversations which theology should address. It argues that theology must follow the word of God as it engages, contests and commandeers the world. It is the task of theology to show that the freedom of man is not the presupposition of his being. Man may become free by being grown and eased into his task and into his place as the creature of God. God creates and forms for man an agency and freedom that he will exercise with God together, and provides the medium within which man may come into that agency and freedom. Theology must provide a complex account of the will and of the complicity of human being. It must argue that we do not yet have a single mind or will, but what mind and will we may come to have is for our sake still concealed from us by God. This first chapter attempts to provide an account in which man does not yet have one mind and set of desires and purposes, and is not yet able to sustain his agency. Such a man of settled identity and mind exists only in the single hypostasis of the God-man who sits at the right hand of the Father. The being that is his is made available to us as the Spirit, so not as object of our knowledge, but as overseer and motor of our formation within the hypostasis of the God-man. A theological anthropology must sustain a sense of struggle, the outcome of which is not yet known, other than as this theological knowledge.

The logic of the economy of modernity asserts that we are already all-present, that we are not in a process of formation, and that our capabilities are not touched or altered by what we do. This modern being is a single form of behaviour and sociality that has become dominant in this economy. The action of this economy produces a being which acts as frame and platform of future action. We call the external aspect of this action, *world* (technology, environment), and its internal aspect, *mind* or self. To treat either apart from action and being is to separate ontology from the modality of being, making *being* something other than act, and so to understand *being* not as verb but solely

as noun. It is to fail to understand that everything material is in time and process, and that our mind, body, place and environment are all brought into being by the processes driven by the totality of action. Our talk about being and doing puts us permanently in the active voice, as though we were only ever agents, never the passive objects of other agency. I argue that the individual has no action and therefore no being, because being is an emergent product of what two people do in the company of a third party.¹ Talk of what is, and of being, must be accompanied by talk not only of what time this being occupies, but what time it generates, what place it has and what space it makes, and thus what sociality created it and is created by it. We are the ones brought into being by the action of others. Our actions do not create something that is alien to us, but create the capabilities, character and practices of which we consist.

This first chapter therefore sets out a theory of persons in constitutive relationship. The concept of person prevents the reduction of the person to being, nature or substance. The work of each creature is the being-and-freedom of all other creatures and the result of an active and ongoing relationship of the Creator with his creature. An account of man must therefore include an account of the place and work into which he is to grow, of the co-labour of creation as task, product and act.

1.2 Persons

In this first section I argue that it is not the case that we are already free agents. We are not free, but bound, and complicit in our binding. There is no plateau of clear or stable human identity. The individual self has nowhere been reached. Such a Kantian and modern theology and anthropology is reliant on belief in the availability of things mediated by the knowing subject himself, and thus under the immediate conceptuality of the mind.² It does not understand that knowledge is difficult or that things have to be learned, the necessary abilities taught and built and so the whole worked for. The limits Kant outlined for theology suppose that we are as individuals already able and ready to hear the Word of God and that the world is a place of peace in which every such claim can be freely heard and weighed.³ Kant enforces a premature unity and uniformity that prevents the emergence of the man and anthropology that he describes.

¹ I will argue in 2.7

² This claim will be discussed in 5.2.

³ This claim will be discussed in 5.1 and 6.3.

1.2.1 Trinitarian persons.

Trinitarian theology must meet this Kantian theology and anthropology with an account which says that the world must first be released from the compulsion that creates this single being, and this being must be addressed both as not-yet-one and as not-yet-many. Trinitarian theology provides an eschatological account of anthropology.

An eschatological theology of personhood is offered by John Zizioulas. Zizioulas distinguishes between the individual and person.⁴ The individual is a demonic and tragic being, removed from the whole sum of the relationships by which he was constituted. A person, on the other hand, is an intrinsically plural being, who sums up and makes present the whole relationship world. The identity of a particular person is not to be found somewhere deep inside him or her: he has no self, centre, soul or other form of private existence prior to his entry to the world of relationship. The identity of each person is spread across the whole nexus of human personhood. It is not hidden in a monadic place without extension; it is constituted and sustained everywhere and by everyone. A person is not the function of some other persons, for then the question would be which persons and which community? Rather, each person is the function of all persons. All the persons in the whole history of the world, future as much as past, will be constitutive of the being of each and every person in the world.

Certainly all the fallen creatures of the world together are not sufficient to sustain the being of a single creature, to bring even one of their number to perfection, so the logic of such a statement must be eschatological. But this world has no other logic than as the creation of God, and its Creator is free to be present to his creatures in it, one economy with them. The persons of the Trinity must therefore be included amongst the persons who constitute the world. As the trinitarian persons are constitutive of each other, so they are also constitutive of all other persons of creation. The persons of the Trinity are therefore the full and sufficient condition of human persons: the conditions of personhood for all are met. The whole nexus of humanity contributes to the identity of each one of us. The sum of Adamic humanity is not of itself sufficient to do this, but the identity of Adamic humanity, and with it the particularity of each, is really given and secured by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is not available either to 'humanity' or to individuals to give away or to add to. God is already society, and 'human' society is not

⁴ John D. Zizioulas *Being as Communion, Studies in Personhood and the Church*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd 1985; 'Human Capacity and Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 28 1975.

(yet) society. Our personhood is the work of the divine persons, and now, in the Church, the whole personhood of Adam's race becomes our eucharistic co-work.

Without persons, there is no being. Being is not a substrate that underlies persons or forms their basis. The persons of the Trinity are persons to one another, and are fully able to correspond to each other: their being and doing does not require the supply of any being-stuff, nor leave any remainder of being-stuff behind it.⁵ Persons are already entirely plural; particularity and diversity are equally safeguarded by personhood and may not be played off against each other. The fundamental assumption of the incompatibility of one-and-many that is the basis of much sociological, political and ethical debate is mistaken. A concept of persons in constitutive relation contests the familiar individual-versus-community definitions of humanity and sociality, systematised in the social sciences and assumed by much theological anthropology and ethics. This represents a comprehensive deconstruction of the protological ontology, and its replacement by eschatological ontology, a move not to be found in any other tradition, and which establishes man and God as free.⁶

1.2.2 The tragic-biological hypostasis

God's intention is to come to man and be with him. This coming to man is not an event initiated by the fall, though the fall now dictates that salvation must be the idiom of this coming. The fall does not make sin constitutive or allow us to talk about it abstracted from its dissolution in salvation. Zizioulas argues that though only sin is possible for bodies determined by death, death also sets the limits to what sin can achieve.⁷ Sin cannot become terminal or speak a defining word: it is contained and sealed off in the damage-limitation exercise of the biological hypostasis, the world and those bodies, human and other, of which the world consists. Considered on its own terms this body is also tragic.⁸ By its bounds this body of ours is made for communion with others, driven by its desire to meet and be with others – and by its bounds that communion is denied it, it is divided from other bodies and left to its own dissolution.⁹ Sin takes the form of individualised being – being an individual. This is not a problem for which a new, extrinsic solution has to be sought, for it is already part of a solution. God has, from the first, kept man safe within the biological hypostasis of the world, held where he cannot

⁵ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 40-1.

⁶ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 39-40.

⁷ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 50-53, 102.

⁸ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 51-53.

do any serious damage to himself.¹⁰ God does not have to cross alien ground to reach man, no to recover him from some state that he has achieved and sustains for himself from his own resources. There is no stable human nature, nor have we accomplished for ourselves a stable entity we can call fallen human nature. The tragic form taken by our biology is not merely a function of our fallenness, but of God's arrangement to nullify and redeem our fallenness. This will be completed when the resurrection turns the biological body into a meta-biological body, the eschatological ecclesial body.¹¹

Man's identity has been linked to an identity he is supposed to have achieved by a primal act of disobedience, and so has too often been confused with his fallenness.¹² Because his identity is not in his own possession, man's fallenness will not finally succeed in constituting him. Freedom is not the cause of a problem. God intends no less than perfect freedom for man, so it is because he was not able to exercise the priesthood for which he is made that man fell, not because he demanded the freedom proper to this priesthood.¹³ Without man to make it free, creation cannot achieve its *telos*, and apart from it, has become so disordered that nothing acquires its proper form and everything can result only in sin.

In one theological tradition it has been supposed that there was no death before the arrival of man in creation, death came as a punishment for Adam's disobedience, and that God himself introduced this evil which he then had to remove through his Son. Against this tradition Zizioulas argues that things have their own proper demarcation and boundaries, and as they have beginnings, so they have ends, and mortality is intrinsic to the world. Boundaries - and with them mortality - are necessary to allow the organism to move through stages on its way to freedom and duration. 'Nothing was created perfect from the beginning. Everything, including especially the human being, was meant to grow into perfection.'¹⁴ Isolated from the *eschaton*, the organism remains stalled in each early form of life, the whole adds up only to mortality, and mortality results in sin. But we may not talk about sin apart from eschatology, for there cannot be a concept of sin apart from the concept of freedom as the end towards which everything is orientated. Sin not deviation from an original state, but from what will be.

⁹ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 47.

¹⁰ I discuss the place and time of this tragic-biological hypostasis in 2.5-6.

¹¹ Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 53.

¹² Kant 'Speculative beginning of human history' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* ed. T. Humphrey Indianapolis: Hackett 1983, 51. See 3.6.2.

¹³ Zizioulas 'Preserving God's Creation': Three Lectures on Theology and Ecology', *King's Theological Review* 12 & 13 (1989-90), Third lecture, 3.

¹⁴ Zizioulas 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology', paper given at King's College, London, 1999, 6.

The hope of creation is dependent on man's hope of absolute freedom.¹⁵ If man is not free the creation cannot reach its own proper order and loses its hope for survival. It is better that Adam retained his claim to absolute freedom, and fell, than that he renounced this claim to freedom and so lost hope of it. And yet, as it is viewed from what it will be, it is the actual condition of the world on its own terms – sin – that makes it impossible for the creation to raise itself from these boundaries and make itself free.

So we have to think of history as a double movement, toward the end for which the world was created, and from that end. Though the world consists of all movement in all direction, the movement from the *eschaton* grasps this movement and makes it correspond to itself, to the end. It is the outward movement of the *eschaton* that makes all other movement, movement toward the *eschaton*. Movement that does not correspond to this is mere deviation and without *telos* or being. Evil is not, as the tradition stemming from Origen believed, a deviation from the beginning, but from the end, an irrational movement towards things other than the end.¹⁶ The creation is contaminated by evil, and those processes which should have been ongoing are instead brought to nothing by non-being. Since the end decides finally about the truth of history, only those events leading to the end will be shown to possess true being, being as such. The historical events of revelation, therefore, are true and real because they lead to the end from which they came into being. Not even the cross has a meaning of its own; it is the resurrection that makes the cross the event it is. Though everything may be said to end in death, only one death, that of Jesus Christ, was taken up by the movement of the end and made to correspond to itself. By this event of encounter with the *eschaton* this death has been made the saving death, the death that gathers in death and brings it to nothing. It is the movement from the end that makes the movement to the end. 'It is the *eschaton* that gives being to history.'¹⁷

¹⁵ Zizioulas 'Preserving God's Creation', Third lecture 3 'If Adam ought not to exercise an absolute freedom, why did God give him the drive towards it? ... it was not a question of exceeding the limits of freedom....if man gave up his claim to absolute freedom, the whole creation would automatically lose its hope for survival.'

¹⁶ Zizioulas 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology' 6.

¹⁷ Zizioulas 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology' 10.

1.2.3 High priesthood

According to Zizioulas, creation is in a state of mortality because it had a beginning. It awaits the arrival of the being determined not by a beginning but by the end - Man, the perfecter of creation.

‘A personal approach to creation would thus elevate the material to the level of man's existence. The material creation would in this way be liberated from its own limitations and by being placed in the hands of man, it would itself acquire a personal dimension; it would be humanised.’¹⁸

Had Adam acted as priest of creation, within the freedom of the end rather than the constraint of his origin, he would have overcome the mortality inherent in these beginnings and ends, and so freed all creation for the life of the creature of God. Adam's fall represented his reluctance to overcome the mortality inherent in creation. Being dependent on a creature, who had not yet learned his freedom and grown into it, creation was not liberated from its mortality.

But it is the end that is determinative, not the beginning. The end re-determines the beginning.¹⁹ The beginning is reckoned from him who is at the end and from whom all beginnings and ends come to take their orientation. By taking the world into his hands and creatively integrating it and referring it to God, the new Adam liberates creation from the failed priesthood of Adam the individual. The future is determined by the Adam who is man-with-God, the creature who is with his Creator. Jesus Christ is the vindication of Israel, the moment in which Israel is revealed to have been Adam-in-waiting, and as the head of creation, the *telos* of all biology.

God is free, and free is what he makes his creation. As the Father and the Son are free for each other in the Spirit, so they are free to be for this creation and for us. It is not by the coming into being of creation that he is the Father, but because he is the Father of the Son who by the Spirit is able obediently to call him by this name. Since, in the Spirit, the Father is free to be Father to the Son, the creation is not a necessary function of their being, and since the creation does not have a two-way dependent relationship with its Lord, it is able to come into existence-and-freedom. Zizioulas has been challenged on the issue of the Father as *aition*, usually translated ‘cause’, but his

¹⁸ Zizioulas ‘Preserving God's Creation’ Third lecture 4.

¹⁹ Zizioulas ‘Towards an Eschatological Ontology’ 9 ‘If we take Irenaeus and Maximus again as our guides, we have to think of history as a movement consisting of two kinds of directions: one is the direction toward the end for which the world was created; the other is away from this end. Since the end decides finally about the truth of history only those events leading to the end will be shown to possess true

insistence on the *monarchia* of the Father is a part of his eschatological ontology.²⁰ *Aition* is not however a synonym for *arche*; it would be better translated 'agency' so we can confess the Father as agent, the starter because the finisher. The agency is not merely the Son's; Jesus Christ is not alone, working his own work, as individual. It is the Father's work he is about, and what he does he does with the Father, and because he is not alone, his agency is valid. To say the Father is the cause is not to say the Father's agency is necessary because it originates in the Father as individual; it is not to attempt to explain the Father's agency, to ask further about rationality or origins.²¹ It is to say that this agency is both plural, 'of the Son' because 'of the Father', and that it is the single agency of the One God, thus is not divisible. In this way it rules against the further and inappropriate use of cause or agency language. That there is one God is our liberation and means that necessity is not intrinsic to our createdness: this 'monotheism' and 'monarchy' is our freedom from the other gods, forces and guises of necessity.

Is Zizioulas's theology the premature triumphalism of the Church, or inner-Churchly language game? Should we not say, against him, that there is real sociality apart from the Church? One expression of this concern comes from Alan Torrance. He asks how the 'trans-subjectivity' of the Church is the foundation and cause of human relationships on what he calls a 'wider scale'.²² We must be careful not to imply that the world is a wider space and the Church a narrower. The world has a vanishing duration, while the Church and therefore the new creation inaugurated in it, has an expanding duration. The Church is a eucharistic and thus an eschatological being, not a special case of relationships the possibility of which is established elsewhere. God, acting in his Church understood on its eschatological definition, holds together what, on all other bases, floats apart. The Church sustains this 'wider' world, which is not wider at all and has no unity of its own, and so it is that future that will indeed make the world both wide and free. In raising Jesus Christ and calling out the Church, God has elected the human race, and elected the Church to be its future, the guarantor of its continuity and identity. As the Church is one, it works this priestly task of making the world one world, and no part of the world is able to secure itself in unfreedom, against this end. The doctrine of

being or being tout court. The historical events of revelation, therefore, are true and real only because they lead to the end from which they came into being, not in themselves.'

²⁰ 'Causer' or 'agent' might be a more adequate translation of *aition*. Alan J. Torrance *Persons in Communion: Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1996, 288-91 and Thomas G. Weinandy OFM, Cap. *The Father's Spirit of Sonship* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1995, 61-4 discuss Zizioulas on 'cause'.

²¹ Zizioulas 'The Father as Cause': A Response to Alan Torrance', Paper given at King's College, London, 1998.

creation is an eschatological doctrine that sets out the future of man as the priest of creation, a future in which he is freely with God.

1.3.1 Ontology and eschatology: Debt is counted from the end.

It is persons who make persons present to each other. The triune persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit are determinative of the possibility of all other persons. If we do not obediently, with God together, constitute one another, much of each of us remains missing and never comes to be. We are all equally in debt, and each other is precisely what we owe each other. If much of what any person can be is not in fact brought into place by those related to him, all parties are stalled. It is the real task of each of us to come up with the whole of the rest of us, a whole that is coincident with the end that God works. Each of us owes all others this future and it is to this end that we are determined and from which we are measured. The future is not an aspect of time, but time is the future's work-in-progress. The future God has for us represents the end of our time, not a confirmation of it.

Debt of being is therefore owed to the end, not to the beginning. Anselm argued that even if a man could pay all his righteousness he would have no excess and that it is impossible ever to catch up the unpaid instalments of righteousness. The foregone honour and the lost time can never be made up.²³ The very strong reality he attributes to evil makes Kant believe, like Anselm, that no man can ever pay his own debt of being, much less anyone else's. Relationship cannot be swapped between persons because relationship is not a stuff and is therefore not transferable. It is impossible to catch up on unpaid relationship, and the debt of being that we do pay is a useless sacrifice because it does not come from the good of the individual disposition.²⁴ Anselm and Kant are not to be held responsible for the juridical idiom of the Western discourse of being. Ours is the Roman tradition, and the Roman thought-world is expressed in terms of property, penalty and control. If Kant is right, there is no rationality to sacrifice, and talk of sacrifice is an outrage to the God-given dignity of man.²⁵

The conceptuality of personhood demands we think about time. But time cannot be examined with the conceptuality we use to discuss substance. Time is to be understood as action in an economy of action and passion, in which temporality is the

²² Torrance *Persons in Communion* 358.

²³ Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* Book 1, chapter 12& 13, Book 2, chapters 19-24.

²⁴ Kant *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 6.72 'This original debt...cannot be erased by somebody else'.

question of who suffers change the impact of whom.²⁶ Here we must relate the concept of time to the determination of God to be for man. God makes time for us. We are in the time he makes for us, not he in the time we concede him. But though we give him no time, he is more at home in it than we are. He takes it from us and returns it to us redeemed. He attributes being and honour to us, and this is the means by which we are able to attribute honour to him and so to each other. Time does not relate to, and is not measured from, One, but to two and more, and so to persons. It is the mode and expression of their relationship. The question of time is a question about God's condescension to suffer and bear us, to take our weight, be measured and timed by us, and so bring us to him. These propositions, argued through the length of this thesis, will contribute to the case for the eschatological economy.

On the modern view we steadily increase our distance from the events of Jesus Christ, and leave the Church behind, just as the Church left Israel. Robert Jenson insists however that Israel is not back there in the past, but here: the actual presence of the Jewish people is the theological datum. Her survival is evidence of God's faithfulness, and the guarantee of this re-definition of this time as the joint time of Israel and God, into which we are also called and gathered.²⁷ If we refuse to acknowledge this people as the elect people we cannot make a coherent claim on the concept of time. But the idea of historical progress represents the reduction of the people of Israel to the idea of Israel, and the turning of the idea against Israel to oust her. According to the idea of progress we move forward, as though to meet someone. But our movement can be said to be forward only if it corresponds to something other than itself. It is the movement of God to us that really moves, finds and meets us, and our movement can only be described as such retrospectively, inasmuch as God takes it to correspond to his movement to us. Only in this way can we speak of a unity of direction and single unified time.

We must ask about the recursivity and eschatology involved in this theory of persons in constitutive relation. How can the future affect 'the past'?²⁸ What is present to one is not present to another, so there is no canonical version of the present. Any time or present has only a local presence within a conversation. Wolfhart Pannenberg asks why Augustine, who borrowed so much from Plotinus, did not borrow his insight that

²⁵ I discuss the office and action of sacrifice in 3.7.4.

²⁶ See 5.6

²⁷ Robert W. Jenson *Systematic Theology* New York: Oxford University Press 1999, Volume 2 336 'Thus until the Last Judgement and our resurrection, Christ has *not* yet come in the way that fully consummates Israel's history.'

eternity produces time.²⁹ Time is the work of eternity. But Augustine, failing to link time and history to the doctrine of God, set time and eternity in opposition, making time that from which spiritual beings had to be rescued. Pannenberg argues that in the same way Kant is wrong to believe that time comes from the subject, but would have been more correct, if he had said with Plotinus that time originates in the soul, understood as whole social continuum.

Being is constituted by the whole economy of action in which we give and receive our identities. The demand we make of the other is that they give us something of themselves, and that that something should be an account of themselves in which they sketch some place which we may come to share with them. The man who does not acknowledge and name his fellows and offer some account of himself among them, leaves himself without anyone to return his identity to him.³⁰ In refusing to offer them his account of their identity, he cuts himself off from his identity-givers and has no third party to offer any account of his being. The accounts we make of each other and which we offer to each other constitute the whole currency and medium of human interaction.³¹ If being is both the action of recognition-giving and the fabric that is created by it, it can be damaged by infringement or lack. When praise and reputation is not given there is a deficit of being, both as fabric (substance) and as action. Praise and recognition are due to God as the issuer of this economy - but they are also due to every member of the economy of God.³²

Colin Gunton relates the ontology of personhood to the atonement in the idiom of justice and the lawcourt. Anselm is the chief exponent of the language of the lawcourt. 'God is the one to whom certain obligations are due: 'to sin is the same thing as not to render his due to God'.³³ It is God to whom these obligations are due, but we must spell out a little further that because they are due to God the Creator they are due also to his

²⁸ In Chapter 2 we will find cognitive science arguing that there is no single version of the present, or single point at which it is settled, but the present is a matter of contending movements and directions.

²⁹ Wolfhart Pannenberg *Metaphysics and the Idea of God* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1990, 97 and *Systematic Theology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1994 Volume 2, 89-95.

³⁰ See 3.7.4

³¹ See 2.7. When our behaviour appears deviant we are obliged to give public account of ourselves in a court of law.

³² This doxological ontology is often understood to be true merely of religious discourse (and it is this belief that makes that discourse *religious* discourse) but it is true of the world too. Such a doxological theology appears in D.W.Hardy and D. F. Ford *Jubilate Theology in Praise* Darton, Longman & Todd 1984, 157 'If life is the process of self-refinement which occurs in praise, and if the condition for this occurs when the excellent-in-itself is present, it can be said that the praise of God actually constitutes the life which we live'.

³³ Colin. E. Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1988, 89 quoting Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 1 xi.

creatures - not because creatures have a right, but because it is the will of their Creator that these creatures grow up into the estate he intends for them. The lawcourt represents the making explicit of the crisis caused by a breach in the fabric of being. 'Anselm's argument depends upon a particular conception of justice. He holds that God cannot simply overlook breaches of the universal law.'³⁴ Gunton argues that the "plausibility structure" supporting Anselm's work is the belief in a divine universal order in which God, man and the creation are to be in harmonious relation.³⁵ Such breaches are missing person-fabric which God *fore-gives*. God does not forgive by announcing that the past is of no account, but rather makes up what is missing from it. He notices the missing fabric - there is judgement and wrath - and himself supplies what is missing. His account will restore the account that has been given so nothing is lost or lived in vain. This embraces Kant's insistence that one cannot substitute for another, and meets the claim of justice that the poor are supplied with what has been withheld from them.³⁶ What God does is obvious only within the medium he supplies. We may not say God gave us his Son, or talk about what goes on in the Temple under the rubric of sacrifice and loss, without giving an account of the medium shared by God and man in which this is meaningful.³⁷ We can talk about profit and loss, exchange and transaction only when we are dealing in a common currency, and it is precisely the establishment of this currency that must be shown to be everywhere at issue, and to be founded only in the doctrine of God. To say that God provides the currency, is to confess this world as the economy of his creation. He provides the medium, currency and 'world' in which men may meet and find each other, and exchange accounts of each other, and in this account-giving, confess God. The action of God opens three and more dimensions to us, but it must be represented in the two dimensional terms of exchange and of loss. We must talk about the action of God in the terms of a finite economy in which a gain here is a loss there. We must be able to say God faces loss and out of this loss brings us into being.

³⁴ Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* Book 1 chapters 12-15, Book 2, chapter 18b, 221-93. Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement* 89 'It is sometimes dismissively observed that Anselm takes his view of legality from the medieval feudal order, and the suggestion is that this is to liken the deity to an arbitrary or oppressive ruler. The fact is, however, that the opposite is the case. It was the duty of the feudal ruler to maintain the order of rights and obligations without which society would collapse.' We return to this issue in 4.4.

³⁵ Gunton, review of Steindl *Genugtuung Biblisches Versohnungsdenken - eine Quelle für Anselms Satisfaktionstheorie?* *Journal of Theological Studies* 43, 1992, 284. See R.W. Southern *Saint Anselm A Portrait in a Landscape* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990, 226 'God's honour is the complex of service and worship which the whole Creation, animate and inanimate, in Heaven and earth, owes to the Creator, and which preserves everything in its due place.... another word for the ordering of the universe in its due relationship to God. In withholding his service, a man is guilty of attempting to put himself in the place of the Creator.'

³⁶ We return to this topic in 3.4.5

³⁷ I discuss this medium in Chapter 4.

1.3.2 Being and persons.

Talk of being refers to an end. The terms debt and credit denominate the movement to that end, the becoming of that being. But being is the function of an economy not just of talk, but of social intercourse and turn-taking on the widest definition.³⁸ I have said that theology must identify modern and Kantian anthropology as premature, an anthropology that may represent a man who has as yet no being.³⁹ I will now argue that the concept of honour will help extricate us from an economy in which being means only substance and will (interiority). Honour belongs to an economy in which men are public beings. We are members of the honour economy by virtue of what we do and what is done to us. The honour economy pre-dates Socrates' turn to interiority which has allowed the West to believe that our real being is precisely not where we are committed to each other in the public square, so the public square represents a threat to our self.⁴⁰ I will argue that ours is no less an honour economy than was that of the ancients, so modern selfhood is a function of this economy. The conceptuality of guilt has to do with debt and credit. To be shamed is to be found without adequate resources of reason and being. Guilt is defined in abstraction from human doing, as something interior and a priori.⁴¹ The concept of honour allows us to avoid reducing the world to the conceptuality of substance. I will argue that we should re-think the dichotomy of presence and appearance formalised by Kant that makes us prisoners of a specious present. Kant saved *ousia*-talk and cause-talk by locking it into a closed economy of nature, where all is object of pure

³⁸ Social science, the science of *social* being, has adopted discursivity to describe its turn to performance. Being is account-rendering. In Chapter 2 we see Harré argue for discursive agents in constitutive relation and the array of public and interpersonal linguistic and practical acts as the 'primary reality'.

³⁹ According to Q. Skinner *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985, 46 Foucault believes that 'Kant is precisely the one who fell into this anthropological sleep with his Copernican revolution in philosophy which put 'man' at the centre of things, and thus condemns the post-Kantian tradition to an unfortunate anthropologism, or idealism, or humanism.' Foucault *The Order of Things The Archaeology of the Human Sciences* London: Tavistock 1970, 341-2 'What is man? This question, as we have seen, runs through thought from the early nineteenth century: this is because it produces surreptitiously and in advance, the confusion of the empirical and transcendental... We find philosophy falling asleep once more in the hollow of this Fold; this time not the sleep of Dogmatism, but that of Anthropology.' Anthropology is the new ontology.

⁴⁰ Kant *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* ed M. Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997 4.4.32 (40-1) believes that 'It was seen that the human being is bound to laws by his duty, but it necessarily occurred to them that he is subject *only to laws given by himself but still universal* and that he is bound only to act in conformity with his own will... I will call this basic principle the principle of the autonomy of the will in contrast with each other, which I accordingly count as heteronomy.' (Kant's emphasis).

⁴¹ The discussion provided by the contributors to M. Carrithers, S. Collins & S. Lukes *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, philosophy history* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985 is typical of the philosophical-social scientific literature for which the ontology is understood in the conceptuality of centre-and-boundary, not of social roles, with the result that the person is first individual, and only subsequently

knowing. I will argue that we hold apart as different discourses our material presence as bodies in the presence of other bodies, and the action of these bodies in presenting ourselves via decisions about what to do and say by which to make ourselves noticed, give ourselves presence and make ourselves presentable. We sustain a dichotomy of ontology of substance and an ontology of action and actuality. The conceptuality of persons-in-constitutive-relation understands that we are what we do. I argue in Chapter 2 that we dress one another in bodily being as surely as we dress ourselves in clothes - the dressing and formation of bodies merely takes place over a longer cycle.

The whole claim of philosophy of reflection is that thought *re-presents*, that it does not *make* our acts, but merely makes them *again*, gesturing to what is always already there before us. On the basis of representation, everything we do refers only to what already is, and so to an origin, the status of which cannot itself be established. All action of ours is merely mimesis.⁴² What is really there we cannot change.⁴³ Heidegger also argued that the *arche* is not the origin that lies behind all *logos* and causes it, but its end.⁴⁴ It is not a matter of presence, but *presencing*, bringing into prominence and making conspicuous. We could attempt to use 'being' as a transitive verb. The being and reputation (not merely *doxa* but *ousia*) of each of us is in the hands of our peers, constituted by what takes place publicly between them, and is only subsidiarily also a function of our own action. I will argue that two accounts are always required. One says that together we co-constitute the world, that all our acts alter the world, and give and take its *ousia*. The second says that *showing* is all that is required to establish the being of what we do. I argue that all making present is re-presentation, all *ousia* is *doxa*, a showing and showing off until everybody accepts your claim, but that it is nevertheless really *ousia* that results.⁴⁵ Here I have simply equated being with honour, and related honour to effort and time. These represent promises that will have to be made good in the course of this thesis.

social. Pannenberg *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1985, 170-9 discusses 'antagonism between self and society'.

⁴² Castoriades C. *The Imaginary Institution of Society* Cambridge: Polity 1987, 189-98 protests against this mimetic ontology, which he attributes to Plato, that does not allow we can bring anything new into being.

⁴³ Hemming L. 'Nihilism' in Milbank et al *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* London: Routledge 1999, 101 protests that *being* has become substance, instead of a project and *conatus*, 'being present' has entirely taken over 'becoming present'. He points out that substance cannot be the basis of discursivity.

⁴⁴ See Heidegger *Pathmarks* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998, 185-230.

⁴⁵ See 2.7

1.4 Theological control on talk of persons.

Talk of persons is theological and eschatological talk. The Holy Spirit is the mediator of the persons of the Trinity. All the movement of the Son to the Father is the work of the Spirit, who calls, sends, trains and makes him obedient, and who raises him and seats him on the right hand from where he now works. God is both enthroned and at rest, and God is in action for us now, working a creation for us. God has a time that is now perfect and complete. This perfect time now extends to us a time in which we are being worked to perfection and completeness – two times, and two discourses. God is at work because there is work still to be done. The Son is with us by the Spirit, such that we are visible to him but he is not visible to us. He extends being to us with the purpose that we become able to receive it from him and return it to him. We receive our being from him as we learn to return what he gives, and to receive from him again in an economy of action. It is God's intention that man should be with him as the free and finished creature; it is God's determination for this end that will bring it about.

Chapter 2

Paideia.

God elects a people to share his holy character. In communion with him, this people receives a new set of skills, a new sociality and body. In communion with God, Israel rehearses and learns the practices of life with God. What constitutes life with God is in process of settlement by God and Israel together. Israel's cult represents this work of formation. Knowledge of Israel's relationship with God, or the status of her performance and cult, is not available to the world of the gentiles. The progress of Israel is measured by the time of God, not by the time of the gentiles. Israel is the recapitulation and transformation of the world of the gentiles into the world of God's creation. Modern and Kantian theology asserts a crass an opposition between the two unchanging natures, divine and human. But the man of such an already-fixed and stable human nature cannot come to know God, because his nature cannot be changed by this relationship and knowledge. Instead we need an account of how such a stable human nature may first come into being, man may *become* man, as he comes into the fullness of relationship with God. This requires a conceptuality in which we can say that man is *not yet* man. To prepare for this argument, this chapter links the concepts of law, mind, will and the body of the community in order to sketch a paideutic and dynamic conception of the creaturely being that God intends for us. Learning is a social process that involves anticipation of its end. The lesson is modelled, the learner is supervised, allowed only to reinforce good performance, and taught how to articulate and improve on it. The learner is educated not merely into new language, but into a new and larger idiom of sociality and embodiedness. The scripture of Israel describes the form of the sociality that Israel is being grown into and provides the support, shelter and body by which Israel may grow into it.

2.1 Two analogies for learning.

Learning to commentate and articulate.

We have to show how learning takes place in freedom that allows a subsidiary and second agency and freedom under God to come into being. The subject of learning will

be introduced in this chapter first by analogy. Let us imagine a sportsman introducing a beginner to his game. He not only works on the learner's stroke, but plays the game with him, and therefore against him. Scoring is part of the game, and must be taught in the course of playing. By scoring the instructor teaches the beginner how to assess his game so he can recognise that he is winning or losing, and that one game has gone better than another. He will teach the learner how to assess his stroke by analysing which muscles to employ or relax at each point in his stroke, discuss together how to name the sensations involved in each movement and, by breaking each movement into units, teach him how to observe his performance for himself. The teacher will teach the articulation of each movement in order to give the learner the means to assess and improve his performance.⁴⁶

Talk about what is wrong with his game serves to improve the learner's performance. It allows him to become aware of his own mistakes, so he develops the skill of identifying mistakes and a feel for the bodily shapes of which the game is comprised. Talk of what is missing or wrong – and talk of sin therefore – refers to a teleology.⁴⁷ It is only inasmuch as someone reckons that you should look forward to the day when you are a good player, that it makes sense to talk about your present performance as not yet good. Talk about the game accompanies the play, and is intrinsic to the game. Giving an account of what is yet to be learned, an account in terms of lack and fault, is part of the game. Our instructor teaches us a new vocabulary, and the conceptuality of winning and losing, in order that we can discover for ourselves how to improve on the movements we make. We have to learn the zero-sum language of exchange as the means of appropriating the three-and-four dimensional language which makes it possible for us to move into the *n*-dimensional space of the truly proficient action, there to be at home.⁴⁸ Only after a lifetime of experience of individual cases (casuistry) do we become expert enough to improvise or to create new law and modes of instruction.

The instructor offers commentary on the performance of the student until the student is ready to provide his own commentary. Performance and commentary inform

⁴⁶ The point of commentary – articulation – is performance of the game. Articulation is not itself the whole game. Reason must be understood as commentary on action in the service of better action. It must serve the formation of sociality and the body that supports it.

⁴⁷ See 3.5.2

⁴⁸ We could refer to these as 3- and *n*-dimensions, or as closed and open economies. The closed we might call the paediatric or orthopaedic economy, the open we could also call the eschatological economy. The orthopaedic economy is created to bring us into the eschatological economy. The eschatological economy creates and powers the orthopaedic economy to this end.

and improve each other. In the case of the people of Israel, scripture is commentary on the action of the ritual. Ritual is intended to teach this people the holy action of their God. Ritual is commentary on scripture and on Israel's current experience, and enlarges Israel's reading of scripture and re-description of life. Israel is taught self-criticism. The vituperation of the prophets directed against Israel, which includes promises of assured condemnation, must be understood as the words of a coach to his team, not intended to be heard by outsiders. Israel is not in any real sense losing for, against God, Israel is not yet good enough to lose. Gradually over time there does grow an implied integrity of action between Israel and God. Israel makes progress, and takes on the character of God, because she spends time in no company other than that of her instructor. Since he is at her side her failure is not allowed to develop any momentum of its own.⁴⁹ Israel's mis-shots are identified as such, repented of, and not allowed to remain constitutive of her performance.

The concept of failure – sin, in Israel's vocabulary – has a function only within the concept of learning and making progress in which good shots are recognised as such and reinforced, bad shots recognised as such and count for nothing. Though it is her poor use of her body that accounts for her poor performance, and all her performance can be traced back to a body not yet mature, yet it is not the case that Israel must wait until she is perfect before she may begin her proper action. It is relentless reinforcement of the right pattern that makes bad patterns more difficult to repeat, and which finally replaces them. Israel will find it difficult to remember how to play badly, finding it easier to make a good move than a bad one. The specific form of life of Israel does not exist prior to her relationship and interaction ('game') with God. It is not that God invented the hoops that Israel then had to leap through. Rather, Israel's mind is formed by the set of events and references experienced and articulated by Israel and God together. Israel constitutes with her God together the record and law of their relationship.⁵⁰

A second analogy may help establish the complexity of the link between the doctrines of creation and reconciliation. God makes the world new by picking up and re-using what is to hand, without this being any the less entirely his own work.⁵¹ Building a house is a relatively unproblematic business involving right-angles and uprights. Building a house as the means of bringing up a gang of delinquent children to adulthood on the

⁴⁹ This is the hermeneutics of 4.3.3

⁵⁰ See 3.5.2.

⁵¹ The doctrine of creation requires two accounts, in one of which creation is *ex nihilo*, and in the other of which God wrests his creation away from the would-be rivals, so that its creation takes the form of re-creation, of a battle and victory. See 4.3.2.

other hand would be less straightforward. For the children for whom this will be not only a first time building anything, but a first time for any social behaviour, the builder would have to combine all that the children did and undid into the simpler work of angles and uprights. It is not that their education is an interim goal, and the building of the house an ultimate goal. Neither goal can be subordinated to the other. The house must have the objective reality of a building, and be the place in which they can live. It must also, however, be the wherewithal by which they grow to be adults, and are provided with support that increases and decreases at every stage as appropriate to each learner. I will argue in Chapter 4 that the temple is that model house that prepares Israel for life in the house and household of God. It is not enough to say that creation is analogous to building a house, and bringing up the children is analogous to the work of reconciliation. Neither children nor house is prior: they refer to each and together point away from themselves to God. The doctrines of creation and reconciliation refer together to the doctrine of consummation.

2.2 The child as learner.

For a second approach to the concept of *paideia* let us consider the case of bringing up a child. Augustine produced a celebrated account of this process. According to Brian Stock, Augustine understood learning to be a form of passively accepting labels as it were from the things themselves.⁵² He believed infants learn to talk, matching word for thing, in the same way that adults learn a second language, matching a word in the new language to a word in their first language. It has been an influential theory, but, as Hacker has shown, it is wrong.⁵³ We learn from the communities that bring us up, and we do not learn language alone, but learn language, body, sociality and world all at once.

It is the mother's attribution of intentionality to her child that brings about the learning of the child. It was not the infant Augustine who strained to grasp and name, but his mother who named his inchoate movements as reaching and grasping, and the noises he made as the attempt to pronounce whatever she decided that he was reaching for. She rewarded his movements by the stimulus of smile and conversation, which he

⁵² Stock, Brian *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge and the Ethics of Interpretation* Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1996 23-5.

⁵³ Hacker P.M.S. *Insight and Illusion: Themes in the philosophy of Wittgenstein* Oxford: Clarendon 1986, 130-1; see also Kerr Fergus *Theology after Wittgenstein* London: SPCK 1997 38-44.

learned to solicit by producing the behaviour she was looking for.⁵⁴ We learn by prolepsis, the work of anticipation afforded not by us but by someone else who has plans for us.

Persons are available to each other only within the set of rules that has evolved with them, and been learned by them. The rules are learned with the relationships. Consequent on the relationships, we learn rules by which to abstract rules from relationships, and use them to build new relationships. The infant knows of no object-world for which to reach out, because it is not obvious to a new-born that there is a world, and bodies and objects: this has to be taught, and is a social business. Because his mother is a social animal, she interprets his movements proleptically, and so they come to be. World and body and mind all arrive simultaneously with our first language. There is no set of dualities - of body and mind, or world and thought, or world and language about it – that is fundamental. Such dualities are not givens of the world. They are heuristics.

It is not only language that we are learning, but a way of being in our bodies, and by a particular idiom of being bodily, being available to each other in the world. It is not merely that we must learn words that we do not know in order to refer to the things that exist in the world, but that the utterly unformed chaotic movements of the infant body must be ordered into complex arrangements which we can refer to as intentionality and as action. The exercises taught by a sports instructor lay down specific pathways in the body of the learner to form a new ergonomic grammar. The pathways are this body: were the pathways to be taken away no body would remain. The sports analogy suggests that physical being is linguistic, and that language is somatic. Bodies are informed by a bodily grammar, and language is an additional idiom of bodily being. We use language to be more efficiently bodily in this or that particular respect. The conventional, and thus language, is always characterised by the analogue, the actual rude movement of bodies, and the conventional and linguistic is an emergent feature of the analogue. There is no gap between semantics and syntax, or between language and bodies in the world. This section has sketched a way of avoiding the dualism of body and mind, that renders unnecessary the dichotomy of material and spiritual that has informed too much modern

⁵⁴ Augustine *Confessions* 1.8.13. 'By groans and various sounds and various movements of parts of my body I would endeavour to express the intentions of my heart.. My grasp made use of memory: when people gave a name to an object and when, following the sound, they moved their body towards that object, I would see and retain the fact that that object received from them this sound.. their intentionality was evident from the gestures which are, as it were, the natural vocabulary of all races'.

theology.⁵⁵ The argument of this section will form the hermeneutics employed in the discussion of the political and cosmological theology of Israel in which there is no prior gap between language and bodies in the world.

What Augustine attributed to the innate power of his infant mind belonged to the labour of his mother who formatted the infant into the complex space of the body-and-*habitus* she determined for him. Language is an extrapolation of the prosody of the movement of the bodies of our parents.⁵⁶ Our posture and our place in the social world is a function of their verbal correction of our posture and bodily performance. Our body is not merely the envelope of flesh, but the habits, regularities and institutions in which we are present with others. We use the idiosyncratic way in which we are in our own body and nearest relationships as the foundation for learning the reductive and therefore shareable symbol systems and rules of behaviour which make us members of institutions, and by which we interact with our environment. Because we learned to be precisely ourselves, we could increasingly easily learn to slip into the sketchier but also more uniform 'selves' of these social bodies and routines.⁵⁷ The world is 'bodies' of behaviour that exist in perichoretic and shifting hierarchies and ethologies. It is others who clothe and dress us in our bodies.

Introducing these points here by analogies from sport and child development has allowed them to be made without interruption. They are important to the argument against the autonomy of reason and mind, and their separation from bodiliness, sociality, and the extended 'body' of a tradition. I will establish them again in conversation with the cognitive science literature, where the connections between play, iteration, emulation and freedom will be made more explicit. We must provide a third term so the distinctions of body and habitus, letter and spirit, presence and absence do not become first dichotomies and then separate economies. This will prepare us to understand that one task of theology is to confront the metaphysics of will and world.

⁵⁵ In 5.7 I argue that theology must also employ and respond to a non-dualist metaphysic which does not contrast body and mind, material and spiritual.

⁵⁶ This is the argument of Terence W. Deacon *The Symbolic Species: The Co-evolution of Language and the Human Brain* Harmondsworth: Penguin 1997, 364 and Horst Hendriks-Jansen *Catching Ourselves in the Act: Situated Activity, Interactive Emergence, Evolution and Human Thought* Cambridge: MIT 1996, 289.

⁵⁷ It is others who make us available to themselves. We are able to inform their performance and co-determine our availability - we can mediate. The multiple drafts theory of Daniel C. Dennett *Consciousness Explained* Harmondsworth: Penguin 1991, 101-37, suggests that our 'self' is a moment of mediation between competing sets of others, and that our present is a provisional version made from many competing versions of time, each intending to make itself definitive by referring its claim to an origin. This I shall call the protological economy.

2.3 Mind as mode of embodiment

Language is an idiom of animal behaviour. The elements of language that are most easily taken up by infant language-learners are the elements that become its most stable features. These evolve from being items of vocabulary to elements of grammar and then the categories in which we think. Each element of a language competes to secure its place in our linguistic stock by making itself indispensable to our communicating, by allowing us to do so with less effort.⁵⁸ Speech is the more efficient way of moving your own and other bodies, and writing is a further way of economising the effort of embodiment.

Julius Kovesi argues that there is no important distinction to be made between, say, a piece of furniture, and any other much more obviously intentional event, like an act of murder. We do not need to say that murder is wrong, because wrongness is part of the concept. It is called murder for this reason. The 'sittingdownableness' of a chair is intrinsic to the concept. If it is called a chair, it is because it conforms to a convention on what constitutes 'sittingdownableness'. The chair is an article of sculptured intention.⁵⁹ The world is full of facts that are already structured, value-and-significance-laden, the result of human action, and though these facts do not constitute all facts of the world, they do co-determine the world.

Herbert McCabe expands on Kovesi's argument.⁶⁰ The animal vitalises and endows its world with significance. The world is the extension and clothing of the animal's body. The simple moral certainties of the pre-human animal world, the clear inhibitions, the fixed social structures of the animal have broken down and the human animal is faced with a much more complex world. Everything man shares with other animals is transfigured by being that part of animality that issues in language.⁶¹ The linguistic animal creates its own modes of response to the environment, of constituting a world, so he is not the prisoner of his environment. The signal codes of animals are not

⁵⁸ Deacon *The Symbolic Species* 125-6, 302.

⁵⁹ Julius Kovesi *Moral Notions* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1967. Burrell *Aquinas: God and Action* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1979, 128 asks 'How can we conceive actions for what they are: the acts of persons? In Aquinas's analysis it is not any decision that makes this the act of a person, but it is by a 'much more prosaic process whereby acts accumulate into stable principles of action, principles generically called habitus or dispositions, also named virtues.' 'Aquinas identifies a feedback process whereby actions not only accomplish the deed intended, but also develop a facility in the agent for acting likewise in the future.'

⁶⁰ Herbert McCabe *Law, Love and Language* London: Sheed & Ward 1979, 71-91. Wolfhart Pannenberg *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1985, 27-79 reviews the literature that attempts to identify what is specifically human and relate it to the *Imago Dei* and the vitalist tradition represented by Herder, discussed also by Zammito *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement* Chicago University of Chicago Press 1992, 181-2, 198-206.

something distinct from the rest of their bodily behaviour, but communication by bodily behaviour reaches a new intensity in man when it becomes language, the free structuring of structure that is already there. McCabe argues that the relation of action and ethical judgement is a question of modalities and therefore an aesthetic question. Kovesi and McCabe have provided us with a more Aristotelian notion of human being.⁶²

Martha Nussbaum is also impressed by Aristotle's account of animal being. Aristotle used the concept of *orexis*, lunging and seizing, to describe the animal form of being.⁶³ Animals are complexes of movement. Aristotle offers accounts of animal motion in terms both of appetite and intention, and of muscles and sinews, keeping together what animals are accustomed to do with what they therefore can do. Over the long-term the one co-determines the other, so behaviour determines species, doing determines being.⁶⁴ Aristotle showed that rational and intellective action is similar to other sorts of animal motion, and is responsiveness not to the world as such but to the animal's own view of it, the species-specific world of the animal. Kovesi, McCabe and Nussbaum suggest that language is structure, continuous with the structure of both the moral and animal and therefore 'natural' world, and this structure opens a particular local world. 'Meaning' is a moving and shifting within the whole space of man's intrinsic animality and process of its re-definition.⁶⁵ With language mankind is not doing anything non-animal, but more reflexively animal. Animality consists in taking advantage of existing patterns of action, complexes of patterns that are navigated around, powered by a non-analogical, physical consumption of the resources of the animal continuum. As every animal looks for a less effortful way to be itself, we also compete to do what the other does in a single economy of emulation and competition.⁶⁶

⁶¹ McCabe *Law, Love and Language* 68-78.

⁶² We return to this Aristotelian notion of the virtuosity of public human being in 6.6.

⁶³ Martha C. Nussbaum *The Fragility of Goodness* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986, 265, 273. Animals are complexes of desires and appetites that combine to create simple units of emotion, motives and self-propulsion. 276 'The intention of *orexis* accomplishes several purposes directly. First it makes us focus on the intentionality of animal movement: both its object-directedness and its responsiveness not to the world *simpliciter* but to the animal's own view of it. Second it demystifies rational action by asking us to see it as similar as other animal motions.' *Orexis* is usually translated appetite or desire: animals are animate because they have *anima, viva vis*, propulsive force.

⁶⁴ Action results in the development of skills and faculties, or in Dennett's terms, the software becomes the hardware over the longer term. There is a dialectic between action and character, and our accounting for either must be an accounting for both, an accounting in two periodicities.

⁶⁵ Elaine Scarry *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* Oxford: Oxford University Press 1985, 253 'Thus the hand is not only the organ of labour, it is the product of labour. The hand is also an artefact, gradually altered by its own activity of altering the world.'

⁶⁶ This prepares us for the argument of 4.3.1.

2.4 The limits of representation.

I have said that an account of persons requires an account of the world as the place of persons. The philosophy of representation however assumes a world that does not change, and therefore is not changed by our relationship to it. We need to find the means to show that the world is not changeless, and that its changing is to some degree determined by our action, including our action of knowing. The philosophy of representation conceives of our knowledge as solely a reflection of what is there, and allows that we owe the world no further duty than to know it. It relies on an input-output model that relates to the assumed priority of mind (inside) over world (outside).⁶⁷ The philosophical tradition has assumed that an explanation of the underlying mechanisms of behaviour must take a Cartesian view of 'inside' and 'outside' and relied on the conceptuality of inputs and outputs and the internal representations between them.⁶⁸ Rom Harré, however, argues that a theory that understands everything as turn-taking, conversation and discursivity removes the need for a concept of mind, and for opposing an inside world to an outside world. He argues that we should study discourse, actions, interpersonal networks and historical developments, and understand that these are linked by norms, not by causes.⁶⁹ We cannot place intentional acts within the framework of causality. Human beings are simultaneously involved in two modalities, the modality of causality and the expressive modality of performative acts.⁷⁰ Cognition is conversational in character, so mental states and processes are not entities of some mental substance or the properties of individual brains. Our actions are what we say they are only because our group of language-users decides that they fit relevant norms and conventions. We cannot say what actions are, without there being a normative understanding of what they are supposed to be, thus cognition is not a matter of computation but of social action that aims at moral agreement.

⁶⁷ The philosophy of representation is attacked by Richard Rorty *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1979, 7-10, and by Antonio R. Damasio *Descartes's Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain* London: Macmillan 1996, 243-51.

⁶⁸ The input-output model is not redundant. I suggest in 5.6-7 that we need both a discourse of inside and a discourse of outside, and then a number of other schemas altogether.

⁶⁹ Harré 'Berkelyan Arguments' 36-50 in Johnson, David M. & Erneling, Christina E. *The Future of the Cognitive Revolution* New York: Oxford University Press 1997. In her 'Afterword' to *The Future of the Cognitive Revolution* Erneling argues 377 that though Descartes, Locke and Hume made mind into a separate area of study, Kant separated mind from epistemology, thus making psychology a separate field of study from philosophy, the pure rules of understanding and rational structures on one hand, and humans' bodies and psychological functions that could be studied empirically on the other.

⁷⁰ See Stanley J. Tambiah *Culture, Thought and Social Action: An Anthropological perspective* Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1985, 2.

Harré believes cognitive science is founded on hierarchies of interpersonal relational structures, the units of which are acts and a hierarchy of personal skills, the existence of which is a necessary condition for the existence of the relational structures.⁷¹ Meanings are immanent in networks, mental models are immanent in hierarchies of personal skills, so the primary cognitive reality is the array of public and interpersonal linguistic and practical acts. Our job is to describe these arrays of nested acts, and the hierarchies of skills by which persons perform acts in the carrying out of tasks.⁷² Though people have to learn the majority of these skills, this is not behaviourism because skill is a normative concept, requiring a semi-permanent state of the body of the skilled person, and some meta-personal system of norms. Skills are located in persons, not in their brains.

According to Michael Polanyi, we learn within the body of a tradition of knowledge.⁷³ The research project of pragmatics has built on Polanyi's insight. Mark Johnson has argued for the conceptuality of body schemas or orientation schemas to replace the too simple modern account of the relationship of the subject to the world he knows. There is no direct transition from light into our eyes to the view we receive, no depiction or immediacy. Johnson sees imagination as a capacity for ordering mental representations into unified coherent meaningful wholes.⁷⁴ We understand our progress by mapping states onto physical locations. Prepositions such as in, out, near, under have meaning only because we have an embodied notion of containment. He argues that metaphorical projections are not arbitrary: it is not the case that anything can be mapped onto anything else.⁷⁵ Words, images, spaces belong to codes that are learned. The concept of affordance has been used by cognitive science to describe this tradition-

⁷¹ See Harré 'Berkeleyan Arguments' 337, and Hendriks-Jansen *Catching Ourselves in the Act* 319 for a similar argument.

⁷² Harré 'Berkeleyan arguments' 346 argues that since 'discursive acts do not cause each other, a hidden realm of linguistic acts cannot be supposed to cause the elements that appear in the overt world of discursive acts. Mental models cannot exist as mental entities behind or transcendent to, the cognitive and material practices to which they are relevant, together with the open sets of rules, conventions and customs that define the necessary skills.'

⁷³ Michael Polanyi *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-critical Philosophy* London Routledge and Kegan Paul 1958, 53-6.

⁷⁴ Johnson, Mark *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1987, 194, 133-115.

⁷⁵ Johnson *The Body in the Mind* 21 argues that 'from the beginning we experience constant physical containment in our surroundings (those things that envelop us). We move in and out of rooms, clothes, vehicles and numerous kinds of bounded spaces. We manipulate objects, placing them in containers (cups, boxes, cans, bags etc). In each of these cases there are repeatable spatial and temporal organisations. In other words, there are typical schemata for physical containment'.

embodied teleological aspect of perception.⁷⁶ J.J. Gibson argued that opportunities (affordances), not things, are the primitive objects of perception.⁷⁷ Animal behaviour is best understood in terms of alertness to opportunities for action: animals move in attunement with the affordances of their species-world. As we have seen, different animals show different degrees of complexity in their appreciation of multiplicities of affordances available in particular parts of the surrounding environment. Worlds (in the plural) of objects and events are carved out of the world (in the singular). All animals perceive affordances, and the human animal is better able than others to create and communicate subtle multiplicities of affordances in his environments.⁷⁸ To touch any part of this tensed environment is to release a force that closes and opens another set of surfaces and options.⁷⁹ These affordances are not causally related to the different behavioural capacities of different organisms, but are another way of expressing these different capacities. This ecological psychology makes no strong contrast between the organism and its environment, because environments are organism-indexed parts of the world.

2.5 Place. Whose economy is this?

Some account of our location in a world is required by any account of persons coming into being. Man is grown and eased into his place and task by the action of God. The human realm is the economy and work of God for us. God does not have to gain permission from humanity before he can enter the human realm. The human city does not succeed in holding out against the divine city, nor earthly and human history succeed in establishing any definition of humanity against God's definition of humanity. Jenson and Pannenberg treat space in terms of God's action, and thus in moral terms.⁸⁰ They

⁷⁶ This discussion of affordance will be taken up again in discussion of practical philosophy, the situatedness of knowledge, and the process of deliverance and purification required for knowledge of the world as God's creation that will contribute to my argument for mediation in Chapter 5.

⁷⁷ Gibson J. J. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1986; Gibson's position is summarised by Sanders 'Affordances' in Weiss, G. & H. F. Haber *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture* London: Routledge 1999.

⁷⁸ Frederick A. Olafson *What is a Human being? A Heideggerian View* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995, 166-7 gives a more sophisticated version of the account offered by McCabe and Nussbaum above. According to Pannenberg *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* 43 Herder's starting point in discussion of the origin of language is that man is peculiarly deficient, naked and unarmed, and that this accounts for the origin of the human mind. Frederick C. Beiser *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard 1997, 146 argues that for Herder 'the mind and body are not distinct types of substance but different degrees of organisation and development of a single living power.'

⁷⁹ I will be using this conception for my hermeneutics of scripture in 6.1.

⁸⁰ For more discussion see Douglas H. Knight 'Jenson on time' in Colin E. Gunton *Trinity, Time and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2000; Gray, Marion 'Time for Jenson' Paper read to the Institute for Systematic Theology, King's College, London, 2002. Pannenberg,

understand that the human city and history have a merely provisional and propaedeutic status that is the function of the work of the divine city and history.⁸¹ God employs the earthly city for a double function. In it he keeps us, in some measure, secured in and by our self-deceit, so our own self-destructive ends are prevented. And God uses it despite us to bring us to his own end, the full freedom of the creature. In Chapter 4 I shall argue that, for Israel, the temple is the model of the earth, and earth a model of the larger eschatological economy of heaven-and-earth. By practising on this model, Israel will pick up the skills of householding for God and his creation. She has been entrusted with a little, so that she may come to be entrusted with much.

But we cannot yet give God his place. We are placed by, and contained within, the world of God's working, and by the same working this world is broken open.⁸² In this world God places us before him, placed and closed by the crucifixion, and placed and opened by the resurrection. As Jenson points out, the Church before the sacraments is the location of heaven, and of Jesus, for us.⁸³ The God-man at the right hand of the Father is the source of the integrity and unity of the Church in the place and time the Spirit now supplies to it, and supplies to the world through it. Wannenwetsch and Hütter discuss the advantages of the discourse of outside, Church as polis, and show that the inner 'natural' world of individual bodily needs, becomes in the Church the open public world of equal citizens.⁸⁴ The closed mechanistic economy is the falsehood we inflict on one another. But it has also been imposed on us by God. He subjects us to the working of this economy that, by enclosing and containing us, prepares us for life in a single open economy with God.⁸⁵ We should consider space under the concepts of action and work, and thus as a moral concept, and relate it to the action of bodies together. We must re-state the claim of the public, the outside, marketplace and public arena over the claims of interiority given priority in the Cartesian and Kantian tradition. We may not reject the

Wolfhart *Metaphysics and the Idea of God* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1990, 97 argues that Plotinus knew better than Augustine that time is generated by eternity, and that it is not sufficient to set the two in simple opposition. Edward S. Casey *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* Berkeley: University of California Press 1997 offers a fuller historical account of the concept of space that understands space to be determined by relationship.

⁸¹ Jenson *Systematic Theology* New York: Oxford University Press 1999 Volume 2, 76-81, 204-6. Pannenberg *Systematic Theology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1994 Volume 2, 81 and Amos Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986, 193 suggest that the concept of space is derived from that of spirit.

⁸² In 1.2 I called this the tragic or biological hypostasis, and will refer to it in 3.7.2 as God's response to Adam's fall. In 4.3.3 Douglas shows that Israel represents its atonement as being given the shelter of a series of covers.

⁸³ Jenson *Systematic Theology* Volume 1, 205.

⁸⁴ See Reinhart Hütter *Suffering Divine Things: Theology as Church Practice* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1999, 158-71 and Bernd Wannenwetsch 'The political worship of the Church' *Modern Theology* 12 1996.

discourse of inside, or of input and output, but we must also find another discourse which does not merely contrast outside and inside, but which understands the world as a function of alternation, conversation and linguisticality.⁸⁶ Next we must turn to an approach that gives action a role to play in the definition of place.

2.6 Time, turn-taking and recursivity.

Time is a register. There are many registers and many times.⁸⁷ The economy of modernity does not succeed in acting as a meta-time that orders them sequentially into one time. Time is recursive. It is the coming and going of time-schemas, a continuum of registers and their units. It is not simply a forward flow, but has ‘undercurrents, tributaries and reversals, floods and islands’.⁸⁸ Dennett introduces the ‘multiple drafts’ model or the ‘scenario-spinning’ model of consciousness, in which there are at any point in time multiple drafts of narrative fragments at various overlapping stages of editing, not in one place but at all places in the brain.⁸⁹ Kontopoulos sees the process of accounting ‘not as an activity that occurs after the completion of interaction – a recollective gathering of the meanings produced – but a constitutive process of the very interaction itself and of the meanings deployed in it.’⁹⁰

If all consciousness is consciousness of something all time is the time of something or time for something. Time is not some thing, but some affordance, an opening for a happening that involves more than the individual. Two agents make time for each other. Time may be said to be generated by their meeting and acting together. Discursivity and diffuse intentionality are required to understand agency as plural and as the work of persons.⁹¹ Discursivity describes the turn-taking or alternation that characterises conversation. Diffuse intentionality relates to the expert audience of

⁸⁵ See 6.1

⁸⁶ See 3.2.3 for Janowski's semi-closed economy of response. The brute contrast of closed and open economies indicates that the concepts of open and closed are no more adequate than those of presence and absence in accounting for the complexly asymmetrical nature of the relationship of God with man.

⁸⁷ See 5.7. Dalferth *Gedeutete Gegenwart: Zur Wahrnehmung Gottes in den Erfahrungen der Zeit* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1997, 239 ‘Die Zeit gibt es nicht, nur eine Vielfalt von Zeiten’. For discussion of time as many registers, see Alfred Gell *The Anthropology of Time: Cultural Constructions of temporal maps and images* Oxford: Berg 1992 and John Bender & David E. Wellbery *Chronotypes: The Construction of Time* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press 1991.

⁸⁸ Gallagher, Shaun *The Inordinance of Time* Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1998, 200.

⁸⁹ Dennett *Consciousness Explained* 126-34.

⁹⁰ Kontopoulos, Kyriakos M. *The Logics of Social Structure* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993, 99.

⁹¹ Simon Glendinning *On Being with Others Heidegger-Derrida-Wittgenstein* London: Routledge 1998 makes the philosophical case for discursivity and diffuse intentionality; Bradd Shore, Bradd *Culture in Mind: Cognition, Culture and the Problem of Meaning* New York: Oxford University Press 1996 makes the social anthropological case.

commentators whose participation gives mere movement the significance of the action of persons.

2.7 Plural action.

I have been arguing for a plural, trinitarian concept of agency that will allow for the pneumatology which I will develop in Chapters 3 and 4. Our action is action only when it is the work of two, and it is the work of two only when an appropriate audience is convinced by this work, so in any account of action, a third party constituted by an expert audience is required. Speech-acts are acts of agreeing and contracting that make up the whole action that constitutes the world.

2.7.1 The expert audience.

I suggested in 1.3 that we demand an account of each other. We demand from the other whatever account he can give of the world and himself. Accounts of the world and of each other are what we give one another. This exchange of accounts is the idiom in which relationship is articulated.⁹² Our complex covenants of reciprocal account-giving are both to be entertaining and hospitable, and to grip and hold us captive. We demand to be enraptured by whatever story the other has to tell. All action involves convincing an appropriate audience of your action, by established routines of demonstration until this audience signals its acknowledgement.⁹³ Such exchange and acknowledgement of accounts are the means whereby we enter contracts and create business relationships.

The event of a contract is inseparable from the process of the creation of a narrative, and records of that narrative, and symbols that are abbreviated forms of those records and that narrative. But symbols, formalities and ritual are not secondary.⁹⁴ Making a public contract involves the manipulation of symbols and employment in ritual of a number of tokens. Records on paper, or in the ancient world, blood, are what make an occasion not only memorable, but a binding contract. The minutiae of terms set down

⁹² For this claim see Dalferth in 3.2.3.

⁹³ Bourdieu *Language and Symbolic Power* Oxford: Polity 1991, 77 'Utterances receive their value (and their sense) only in relation to a market'.

⁹⁴ Contracts in the ancient world created the sense of occasion by the employment of animals and their blood. Sacrifice was in the ancient world the mode of making contracts. Such ritual is documented for ancient sacrifices by Burkert *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* Oxford: Blackwell 1985. Victor Turner *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors Symbolic Action in Human Society* Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1974, pioneered an anthropological literature on performance and ritual: Mary Carruthers *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990 and Paul Connerton *How Societies Remember* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1989 summarise the literature on the art and technology of pre-modern memory.

on paper are a public demonstration by the two parties to the witnessing and sponsoring community of the earnestness of their intent. The gesturing with these various props and tokens is intended to create a narrative that will win an audience that will ensure that the contract is subsequently honoured. The audience bound by this narrative is the guarantor of the contract. The paperwork and other ritual of the contract are the means with which this community is gathered and the contract is written, we might say, on the memory of the community that witnesses and judges it binding.⁹⁵ The action of the lawcourt is casuistry, the discussion of case histories. In court the two sides offer analogies from previous cases: when these are accepted as analogies by the court, they argue from them. Argument (logic) follows analogy (*analogic*, narrative).

The domination of the philosophy of reflection has resulted in our failure to understand ourselves within skeins of expectation and involvement. But philosophy and theology have not remained in conversation with the law faculty, which does understand that we make things happen by contracting and making oaths. The result is that these disciplines, along with social science, have had to look for other ways to prevent that action that cannot be reduced to the individual from appearing simply incomprehensible and irrational. The interest in speech acts and the concept of perlocution is an attempt to show how words are binding and constitute valid contracts and acceptable sacrifices while on another occasions, identical words are not.⁹⁶ What to the Victorians looked like primitive and superstitious attempts to manipulate the world or its gods should instead be seen in the much more mundane terms of commercial interaction.⁹⁷ The sacrificing of ancient societies was speech-act by which they performed the very same chores of economic and institutional encounter we do. The concept of speech-act serves to represent the binding and contracting effect of all public performance and which creates

⁹⁵ In 3.4.2 I discuss the performative hermeneutic of 'echoes' and 'resonances' presently being constructed by some New Testament scholars. This relies on a single world-fabric of explanatory memes set in narrative and teleology, an affective continuum that is a function of all that is said within it. I will ask whether they realise that what they hold to be the case for the ancient world (in which Jesus told parables and performed symbols), is also true for our world. I ask whether New Testament scholarship has any right to a theory of symbol unconnected to a narrative and cosmology that belongs to Israel's creation theology, or that does not also hold good for us moderns. The modern world equally consists of the exchange of narratives and abbreviated narratives, record and symbols - albeit that the narrative of modernity is about the end of narrative, the loss of symbols. I discuss this thesis of disenchantment, secularisation and the collapse of mediation in Chapter 5.

⁹⁶ See John R. Searle *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech-acts* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1979, 1-29 for a statement.

⁹⁷ See the discussion of Frank Cioffi *Wittgenstein on Freud and Frazer* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998, 80-92.

all public relationships.⁹⁸ Language is in itself sets of laws regularities. It is the tissue of attachment, connectedness, and contract, and is thus the medium of public performance. The discussion by hermeneutics of speech-acts represents ignorance of the legal and commercial discourse of oaths and trust. It is of a piece with the failure of modern theology to conceptualise the plurality and therefore the situatedness of human interaction, and which has therefore made resort to the concept of metaphor to fill the gap.⁹⁹

2.7.2 The turn to performance.

To achieve this more active ontology that understands action as dramaturgy we may perhaps say that the actor on stage shows the audience its own action, and that the audience recognises itself in the actor's performance.¹⁰⁰ The actor shows the audience its action complete with its result, and demonstrates that it never manages to complete an action without interrupting it with another. The unforeseen continually interrupts our action. Our action consists of adopting and discarding again a succession of behavioural memes, with the result that all our action comes to nothing.¹⁰¹ We claim that our action is exclusively our own. But the actor's performance shows that he can repeat what we do, and since we cannot show that we succeed in out-doing the other man by doing what he

⁹⁸ Law is what language *does*. Reason is what language *does*. Language is not in the first place representation (reflection) and only secondarily and more problematically performance and (speech-)act. Bindingness is an equation of attraction and repulsion that creates the tension by which the whole is held together.

Tim W. Murphy *The Oldest Social Science? Configurations Of Law and Modernity* Oxford: Clarendon 1997

106 argues that trust is a matter of 'implicature'. This has had to be laboriously established by Austin and Searle by appeal to Wittgenstein. Ochs, Peter 'Rabbinic Pragmatism' in Marshall, Bruce *Theology in Dialogue: Essays in Conversation with George Lindbeck* Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press 1990 establishes the link between scripture and law. Anthony C. Thiselton *Interpreting God and the postmodern self on meaning, manipulation and promise* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1995, Sue Patterson *Realist Christian Theology in a Postmodern Age* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999 and Kevin Vanhoozer *Is there a Meaning in this Text? The bible, the reader and the morality of literary knowledge* Leicester: Apollos 1998, along with that majority of theological discussion of hermeneutics that does not connect speech-acts and law, represent the failure of biblical-theological hermeneutics to understand itself also as political-theological hermeneutics, a failure I discuss in Chapters 5 and 6.

⁹⁹ See 4.6.

¹⁰⁰ The actor has licence to look to imitate, parody and frighten us. James W. Fernandez *Persuasions and Performances: The play of tropes in culture* Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1986 and Erving Goffman *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour* Doubleday, Anchor Books 1967 and *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* Doubleday, Anchor Books 1959 for discussion of the use the conceptuality of actor, audience and dramaturgy in daily life.

¹⁰¹ Charles L. Griswold *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999, 109 argues that 'without a mask we cannot be actors either to ourselves or to others, and do not exist as human or moral selves. In this sense human life is fundamentally theatrical. It is not simply that we cannot be known as we really are; it is that we are not unless we are known by the spectator.' Further support for Griswold's case can be found in Michael Billig *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1987 49-53; Christopher P. Smith *The Hermeneutics*

cannot do, our claim that our action is ours exclusively, fails. All drama is parody of life. The point of all drama is to wrench its audience into new realisation of the limits of their own action.

We see in Chapter 3 that what members of Israel did in the temple can be understood as the mode of the formation of the house of Israel, and in Chapter 4 that on the cross one member of Israel performed this to the satisfaction of God.¹⁰² By God's better performance towards us in the single dramaturgical economy he maintains for us, we are shamed into leaving behind our inept action and imitating his virtuoso action. God out-acts us, and so draws us into his more convincing performance so that it becomes truly our own.

Practical knowledge is the medium of knowledge, and the aesthetic is the mode of practical knowledge. We are driven to seek a mode that will allow greater economy of effort. In knowledge too, we are driven to find an easier way. Theological and philosophical enquiry that insists on looking for a new and specific telos for each action does not allow for the frivolity and indifference of the greater part of our doing. Most of our activity has no particular rationale but only the general rationale of all performance – that it feels good and looks good. We should ask not why, for what specific reason, but how? How well is it done? With what success? The question of how holds good for the whole effort of the formation and education of the body and so for the sphere of public interaction and politics. Good politics, in the form of new opportunities for the formation of the body, arise in the medium of emulation and competition in which all our mundane contracting together takes place. We must resist the impulse to examine every move only under the twin concepts of truth and good, but also employ the aesthetic as the category of work, efficiency and purposes.¹⁰³ This prepares us for Augustine's comparison of two regimes and modes in Chapter 6.

All the forms of action by which we hold ourselves together and negotiate our way through moral space were formed by the social body into which we have grown.¹⁰⁴ Those body schemas that the community ceases to name come to determine that community. They devolve into the dichotomies of inner and outer, and higher and lower,

of *Original Argument: Demonstration, Dialectic, Rhetoric* Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1998, 97, 236-42, and Alfred Gell *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* Oxford: Clarendon 1998, 14-23, 99-104.

¹⁰² We will discuss narrative and enthrallment in 3.2 and 4.5 in the issue of who may read the scriptures and 4.5, and in 3.1 and 3.5 on Israel's liturgy and sacrificial office of Israel.

¹⁰³ The concepts of the aesthetic and efficiency relate to the discussion of fit, bodily effort and the single continuum of emulation.

¹⁰⁴ According to Robert W. Jenson 'You Wonder Where the Body Went' in *Essays in the Theology of Culture* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995, 221 'What bodies really are, is *availabilities* that enable *freedom*.'

that derive from the priority given to the one over the many in the protological ontology. The Christian community has to bring such body schemas back into public thought, keep them in use and continually re-integrated into the social body.¹⁰⁵ I will use the resources sketched in this chapter to argue that the forms of action of the economy of modernity have given all our movements a crampedness that God does not intend for his creature. God calls us into a larger territory. This allows us to say that we resist being moved beyond the familiar bounds of nature and necessity into the larger place of God. Apart from this commandeering by God, all our pathways and orientations become cosmologies and paganisms, forms of the recalcitrant and merely animal life. In Chapters 3 and 4 I will argue that under God's direction, and with his enabling, Israel obediently builds the house where she may be with him. In building this model she learns God's action. Israel learns to pull down rival constructions, redeeming the earth from other claimants to make it the creature and creation of the one God. This destruction and building are a single act. Israel's address to the gentiles is always a commandeering and abuse of their conceptuality, but by sketching the new creation over the old, Israel points to its redemption and looks forward to a new being.

¹⁰⁵ Hegel insisted that they have to be thought and re-thought, and when they are not re-animated by thought they become nature, substance and fate.

Chapter 3

God and his servant and their work.

This chapter sets out a discussion of God's freedom to be for us, with us and really to determine us for himself. It offers an account of atonement. It does not discuss the oneness of God apart from his determination to make us one with him. Making one is an action of God, that has the double form of distinguishing and reconciling, separating and bringing together. I will not therefore tackle the issue of models and metaphors of atonement in a separate discussion. This would then require a further and disastrously separate discussion of metaphor and religious language, and so the reinforcement of a sphere of distinctly religious concerns. Instead I will continually relate hermeneutical issues back to the doctrine of God, referring the issue of what scripture says to the issue of the community to whom scripture is addressed. In Chapter 6 I will argue that only the doctrines of God and of creation secure for us a world which is one, and in which therefore we can know, and be known by, one another. I do this here in terms of the Jewish and Christian discussion, and thus through the issue of supersession and salvation history. I recount the history of Israel and the Church as the one ongoing work of God, and relate this single salvation history to the concept of time. This will take the form not of an examination of the scriptures themselves but of the range of resources that biblical studies are able to provide for theological questions.

Israel is the work of God on the world of his creation, and the medium of that work, apart from which there is no knowledge of God. Israel is the election of humanity by God to the office of steward of creation, and to leadership of the peoples of the world. The nations have no means to know the identity of Israel and her God other than through the people God elects for this purpose.

3.1.1 God and his servant.

We turn to the issue of God and his servant, and God and his work. The freedom of the creature is the purpose of God, and the concepts of person and creature allow us to talk

about this purpose. The creature is in relationship with God; creatureliness therefore represents a high status, not a low one. But we do not yet have the full status of creature. The question of the identity of God's creature and agent must be referred to God, not the agent. To answer it by referring to the agent would be to divide God from his messenger, and to turn the messenger back on the grounds that he is not God himself. But God allows no identification of himself apart from the one race of people he has chosen: inasmuch as they are his property and have his Name, they are the agent of God for us. It would be wrong to say they are him if that is all we said, but with the trinity we have the conceptuality to provide two distinct but simultaneous accounts of God's action in order to demonstrate its freedom.

Is God still Yahweh, the God of Israel? Have Yahweh and his servant been engaged from the beginning in a work that has never ceased to be successful? Or should we say in more supersessionist mode that the time of the many generations recorded in the Old Testament was just the passing of so many generations that have now vanished? Though this time might have been productive, as it turned out it was not, because, though God always expected Israel finally to spring into life, Israel never did. Is it a story of delay and final failure? This is how it may seem if time is understood as a stuff that, at least in dealing with men, God has to endure. But God does not endure time as something that sprang from some other and rival source, but rather himself makes time, and gives it its telos. Indeed it is not properly time until it is united with its telos. In this case we can say that the Old Testament was both the real time of God and Israel together, and that it is their continuing time. It is not past, but is the ongoing time in which Israel is borne to adulthood and the full office of creature and servant.

Some scholarship identifies the trinity as the concept that separates Christians from Jews. It assumes that the way to Jewish-Christian dialogue is to emphasise monotheism and play down the doctrine of the trinity. James Dunn tells us that 'Christianity is only Christianity when it is monotheistic. Only so can Christians remain true to their roots, to their heritage within the religion of Israel.'¹ Francis Watson counters, 'If "monotheism" here refers to a view on which Jews and Christians agree, over against classical Christian trinitarianism, these statements would have to be reversed. Christianity is only Christianity when it is trinitarian. Only so can Christians remain true

¹ James D.G. Dunn ed *The Parting of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* London: SCM 1991, 247. The 'Parting of the Ways' debate identifies supersessionism as error but continues to rely on the concepts the error has created. It is an inverse supersessionism, in which some anachronistically-defined temporally-static community (Christianity) is guilty of causing the break of which it is the product.

to their Jewish roots and to the Jewish scriptures within their canon. A 'Christian' unitarianism is not a Christian faithfulness to Jewish roots and scripture.² I will argue with Watson that the trinity is the doctrine that puts Christians together with Jews.

There were many Judaisms, some inherited by Judaism, some by Christianity.³ It was only with regard to what it called Christianity that Judaism insisted that it was one Judaism and not many. Likewise Christianity insisted it was one only with regard to what it called Judaism. Considered apart, they make two. But apart from Israel, the Church may not confess itself one. The unity of each community is the function of the indivisible work of God. Each side played up the differences, and claimed that the other party had moved away from its origin. In actuality neither side took anything away from the other, or made it impossible for the other to make proper use of the scriptures. What in the Apologists' period became Christian theology was not a fixed quantity but competition for the resources of scripture. Patristic and conciliar theology did not arise as part of a growing away from Jewish resources or living from its 'own' resources, but as a continual process of the rising to expression of Israel's scriptures as address to the world.

3.1.2 Election

The doctrine of the election of the Jews was returned to the centre of dogmatics by Karl Barth.⁴ God is faithful and worthy of trust to the extent that he continues his promise to this people. Eugene Rogers wants to take Barth's project on by supplementing his biblical pair of election-rejection with the Spirit.⁵ 'To identify God by the Holy Spirit is to refuse to abstract from God's concrete self-determination to be for Israel.'⁶

² Francis Watson *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1997, 329n.18.

³ Jacob Neusner 'Judaism and Christianity in the First Century' in Philip R. Davies & Richard T. White *Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History* Sheffield: JSOT Press 1990 254. The analogies of quarrelling siblings or failed marriage rely on the prior existence of more than one entity. It seems much safer to start with Neusner from the point that what we have too casually called Judaism was always a coalition of parties – judaisms – gathering round competing readings of the Scriptures, readings that could not be reduced to a single canonical version.

⁴ Barth *Church Dogmatics* IV,3 edited by G.W. Bromiley & T.F. Torrance Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1961, 878 'Thus it (the Church) still owes everything to those (the Jews) to whom it is indebted for everything.'

⁵ Eugene Rogers 'Supplementing Barth on Jews and Gender' *Modern Theology* 14, 1998, 61 believes Barth is the 'father of many late twentieth century doctrines of Israel that improve on him'. Wolfgang Kraus *Das Volk Gottes Zur Grundung des Ekklesiologie bei Paulus* WUNT 85 Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck 1996 356 agrees: 'Die paulinische Gottesvolk-Konzeption im Rahmen der Rechtfertigungslehre – wie sie im Rom begegnet – ist die einzige Konzeption innerhalb des NT, die fähig ist, das Problem Israel-Heiden so zu lösen, daß die Einheit des Gottesvolkes gewahrt und zugleich beiden Seiten Rechnung getragen wird, d.h. sowohl die Berechtigung des christlichen Selbstverständnisses als endzeitliches Gottesvolkes als auch die bleibende Erwählung Israels als Volk, dem Gott sich unerlöslich verbunden hat, ihr Recht behalten.'

⁶ Rogers 'Supplementing Barth' 62 argues that '[F]or Gentiles redemption is the plot, consummation the denouement; for Jews consummation is the main plot, redemption the subplot, the outcome of which is never in real doubt.'

Consummation, not redemption is the model for Israel. The power of Jesus Christ is an abstraction if not bound to the act of a particular community. Barth avoids an abstraction from Christ but abstracts from the Spirit. Though God has a particular relation to Israel, Barth cannot make plain what it is, because he does not show that God's relationship to the Jewish people is ongoing. The 'Old Testament in abstracto' for Barth, is the 'passing' form of the human being, and to the extent that for Barth the Synagogue is that which human beings need to be saved from, it is Spirit-bereft. Jenson proposes as supplement to Barth's 'Jesus Christ is the electing God', that 'the Holy Spirit is the electing God'.⁷ Barth's recovery of typology, in the form of pairs of election-rejection, man-woman and Jew-Gentile, made possible the recovery of the whole Old Testament for christology. Rogers wants to supplement each of these with the Spirit as a third term, for it is not individuals but community, this specific community, that is elect.⁸ We should then identify God not by focusing on Jesus Christ as *individual*, but on Jesus *and the community the Holy Spirit gives to him*. By doing so we refuse to abstract from God's concrete self-determination to be for Israel.

Kendall Soulen identifies three forms of supersessionism. Economic supersessionism is the idea that from the beginning God's purpose for carnal Israel in the economy of salvation was destined to be fulfilled and completed by Christ's coming, after which its place was to be taken by the Church. Punitive supersessionism is the idea that God has abrogated the covenant with Israel in anger because of Israel's rejection of the gospel. Structural supersessionism refers to the classical *ordo salutis* (the creation-fall-redemption-consummation pattern) that is present whenever the Old Testament does not shape Christian doctrine.⁹

Barth repudiated structural and punitive supersessionism, and made God's election of Israel central to God's faithfulness. But he is still vulnerable to the latent semi-Gnosticism of the classical model in which redemption tends to mean deliverance from history. Soulen wants to see 'the classical account of trinitarian relations originating from the Father...supplemented by relations originating from the eschatological dominion of the Holy Spirit.'¹⁰ He declares that 'the name Jesus (Y'shua) means

⁷ Jenson 'You wonder where the Spirit went' *Pro Ecclesia* 2/3 1993.

⁸ Rogers 'Supplementing Barth' 70 Barth's I-Thou categories 'hide the presence of third parties and the mediation of disciples, crowds and friends. Christ promises to be with human beings not each individually but when *two or three* are *already* gathered in his name.'

⁹ Kendall Soulen 'Karl Barth and the Future of the God of Israel' *Pro Ecclesia* 6.4, 1997

¹⁰ Soulen K. 'YHWH the Triune God' *Modern Theology* 15 1999, 44.

“YHWH saves”, and that this has been interpreted since Irenaeus in a trinitarian sense.¹¹ Soulen concludes that ‘The name Jesus Christ may thus not unreasonably be said to contain internal reference to the name YHWH and to the triune shape of the evangelical history as this history is packed into the title Christ.’¹² The resurrection is the resurrection not of an individual but of Israel, and by it Israel is vindicated and established. Soulen asks two questions. Can Christians concede that God's election of Israel, and the consequent distinction between Israel and the nations, is as permanently relevant to God's consummation of the world – past present, future – as for instance, the distinction between Creator and creature? Can Christians see the two scriptures without claiming that the Old Testament is ‘exhausted by or even primarily located in its reference to Jesus’?¹³

Robert Jenson also argues that God is himself a participant in Israel's history. ‘What the Lord does to Israel he does to himself, in that the shekinah shares Israel's lot and the Lord's being’.¹⁴ The angel to Abraham, for example ‘is a messenger ‘of’ God who nevertheless refers to God in the first person. He is God himself as a participant within Israel's story, who is nevertheless related to God as the one who sends him and who determines Israel's story.’¹⁵ Jenson's approach prevents the Old Testament being reduced to the New Testament by a promise-and-fulfilment pattern. ‘Until the Last Judgement and our resurrection,’ says Jenson, ‘Christ has not yet come in the way that fully consummates Israel's history.’¹⁶ The New Testament can be understood not only as a reading of the Old Testament, but as the reading made by the One who may open the scroll.¹⁷ But this Reader is not here, so the New Testament is that reading in which God has left us to go elsewhere, there to prepare a place for us. This argument is supported by Douglas Farrow, who insists that the ascension and thus the withdrawal of Jesus is the

¹¹ Basil *On the Holy Spirit*, quoted by Soulen 46 agrees: ‘To address (Jesus as the Christ) is a complete confession of faith, because it clearly reveals that God anoints the Son (the Anointed One) with the unction of the Spirit.’

¹² Soulen ‘YHWH the Triune God’ 44-5; see also Seitz, Christopher *Word Without End : The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998, 234.

¹³ Soulen ‘Karl Barth and the Future of the God of Israel’, 427.

¹⁴ Jenson *Systematic Theology* Volume 1 New York: Oxford University Press 1997, 76 ‘With the phrase ‘the Shekinah’, the rabbis gathered a whole range of biblical discourse that speaks of God as ‘settled’ to and within Israel while not ceasing to stand over Israel.’

¹⁵ Jenson *Systematic Theology* Volume 1, 76.

¹⁶ Jenson *Systematic Theology* Volume 2, 336; Soulen ‘YHWH the Triune God’ argues that Jenson has not gone far enough. In his ‘eagerness to underscore the claim that the Trinity is the distinctively Christian way of identifying God (up to the claim that Father, Son and Holy Spirit constitute God's proper name), Jenson fails to give the name YHWH the significance that it achieved in Barth's thought.’ Jenson ‘historicizes the God of Israel on the one hand, and turns it into the instantiation of a metaphysical truth on the other.’ The name ‘Jesus’ is the divine name in the phrase ‘Yahweh saves’.

¹⁷ See 6.1

major teaching of the New Testament. He is not here – he is ascended. ‘Worse than the world's ignorance of Jesus's absence...is the Church's failure to proclaim the absence clearly, to witness in its every act of worship that it really is ‘looking for his coming again with power and great glory’.’ Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, from where he has released to us his Spirit, and by him sends his own spiritual flesh to clothe us.¹⁸

Some biblical scholarship has responded to the issue of the relationship of Church and Israel by downplaying the doctrine of God, election and atonement. As we shall see, some of the discussion that stresses the centrality of the people of Israel also tends to minimise Israel's cult, or not to allow discussion of the cult to meet dogmatic talk of representation and substitution or of Israel's ongoing action and office.

3.1.3 The trinity as the concept of God, his servant and his work.

The Torah is given to Israel to become her native language. For the gentiles brought by baptism into Christ though, it is a language they have to learn. Because it was not their first language they had to discover its grammar for themselves. In making the Torah explicit to themselves, the Christians realised that the grammar of the dealings of God with Israel is plural, non-periodic and open. Because the Torah concerns God's lordship and the future he has for us, it is not determined simply by what is past. Since Israel never had to learn the grammar of their language the hard way, they did not make explicit to themselves that God is speaker and listener, commander and obeyer. In each case he is also the means of this speaking and listening, commanding and obeying, that is the language spoken, the medium shared and inhabited. This logic may be called trinitarian.

The doctrine of God the Creator is a doctrine about God who is with his creature. The Trinity is the conceptuality by which we can express this.¹⁹ Barth insisted that the covenant of election is the internal basis of the covenant of creation to this end.²⁰ On the basis of natural theology, creation is a synonym for existence: on such a natural basis we believe that we already know, prior to the gospel, what a creature is and that God cannot be one. But creation is a doctrine taught and confessed by the Church: it is not a statement about what is, or what is visible, but about what will be the case

¹⁸ Douglas Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1999, 272.

¹⁹ There is no *prior* difference between God *with* his creature, and God who *is* that creature whom God is with. The difference between *with*-creature (*relation*) and *is*-creature (*being*) is a difference that is established by *God's creating action*, not one prior to creation. I argued for such a relational ontology in Chapter 1.

²⁰ Barth *Church Dogmatics* Volume III.1 § 41.

about the world.²¹ The doctrine of creation is that the world is someone's piece of property. The question is not therefore what is the nature of this piece of property, but whose property it is? What is the character of its owner?

This allows us to say that Israel is the only people holy enough to recognise the mediator between man and God. It takes the Son (Israel) to know the Father. The Father has been everywhere at work, but to know him and recognise him requires co-familiarity with him. By the Spirit the Son gets the practice and acquires the skill correctly and obediently to return to God that recognition. Israel hides from the office of lord that is hers, and yet the Church must confess that this hiding is an option that Israel finally turns from. Each generation of Israel has produced those who watched for the coming of the bridegroom: in their priestly performance they have obediently witnessed to him, learned the name to call him by, and prayed for his return to Israel. In the form of the high priest, the Son has always been at work, working and serving the Father. God is a member of Israel.²² As this member God is responsible, and of course also solely responsible, for Israel's faithfulness, holiness and survival. So we can say that God is always with and among Israel. The Spirit is always at work to make Israel holy and her election good. In Jesus the Spirit succeeded in making one single instance of Israel, one man who is man with God. By making copies of this obedient Son, the Spirit will succeed in making many sons for Abraham. This is the outcome of reading the Old and New Testaments as the single testament of the triune God.

In response to this challenge to show more adequately the plural aspect of the electing action of God this thesis attempts to let the concept of Israel function as a pneumatology. This requires that we do not attempt to speak theologically of Israel apart from her king and her head, or of God apart from the one and the many whom he has made the means of his self-revelation to us. Christ is *totus Christus*, Christ-with-his-people, and Christ with the Spirit and by the Spirit. There will therefore be no explicit statement

²¹ This is argued by I.U. Dalferth 'Creation - Style of the world' *International Journal for Systematic Theology* 1, 1999.

²² Jenson *Systematic Theology* Volume 1, 83 explains that there must be a 'difference between an Israelite who stands over against Israel and the people without whom this one is not himself... Were there only a singular creature who in his own person as 'one of the Trinity', in his instance, the difference between God and creature would simply be abolished; but, in that the one person is the one he is only as identified with a community whose members are not, in their singular persons, identities of God, the one Israelite's membership in God in fact sustains the difference between God and creature.' An Aristotelian logic of either-or is (necessary but) not sufficient for theological statements involving relation, perichoresis and transformation. N. Appel *Kanon und Kirche* 376 argues that 'Das Selbstbewußtsein der Kirche ist schließlich das Selbstbewußtsein des ganzen Christus, des Hauptes und Leibes', quoted by John Webster 'The dogmatic location of the canon' *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 43,1 2001, 27. The self-

about whether human or divine Israel is being referred to, but where the one is referred to the other must be understood. This pneumatological discourse is of course not a sufficient discourse. It must be accompanied by a separate discourse that employs the language of two natures, to distinguish the human from the divine, and creature from Creator. The distinction between God and man is driven by God-*who-is-with-man*, the Father who keeps the Son, clothed as creature, at his right hand. Pneumatological discourse enables the discourse of Father and Son, and of persons therefore.

3.1.4 The attempt to separate Israel and Jesus.

The Old Testament addresses itself to the many societies that come into confrontation with it, and the New Testament is the way it does so.²³ Much biblical scholarship however treats the New Testament as a separate and autonomous testament. Such scholarship deals with the first century in ignorance of all previous and subsequent centuries, as though in the first century alone Israel had to start to articulate her relationship with the world. But Israel has seen many empires, and the Old Testament is her considered response to them: it expresses her knowledge of herself as steward of the world and of her mandate to rule it. I will ask whether exegesis can read Israel's scriptures as political-cosmological world-claim, and understand the public and performative nature of Israel's action as one that anticipates and practises a new economy of action. That biblical exegesis which makes Israel's rites, purity teaching, sacrifice and temple problematic serves only to render invisible the action given to Israel for our sake.

I will argue that Jesus is the messiah who makes all Israel messiah, a single entity that takes its identity from him. With his people Israel Jesus is the oneness and indivisibility of God in his work. God's work and being are not divided into before Jesus and after him. If it were, Jesus would represent the division and therefore the destruction of God's work. Historical criticism identified Jesus as the first individual, and we must therefore ask whether it has not used Jesus to separate God from his work. New Testament scholarship that does not allow the unity of Christ and Israel would be in continuity with the unitarian christomonist theology of Jesus spirituality that seeks an

awareness of the church is ultimately the self-awareness of the whole Christ, head and body. Christ is determinative of the awareness and self-awareness of his body. He is its understanding of what (who) it is.

²³ Markus Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997, 124 argues that '[N]ew and Old stand in a reciprocal relationship: new revelation is always meta-revelation, given shape and texture by a charismatic reading of the old; yet once accepted and

individual. This scholarship would be looking for someone it has decided does not belong to his people or they to him, an individual subject of narrative (Jesus) or notional individual author of narrative (Paul). It would be searching the first century for the pioneer of twentieth century man.²⁴ On this basis Jesus would be the first of many men-without-relation, the sure object of science who, to be identified, must be separated again by historical criticism from the crowd he gathers around him.²⁵ Such a New Testament studies would be unitarian: it would incline to separate Jesus from Israel because it refuses to take with him the manyness of the hands employed by the Word of God, with the effect of creating a new time - Modernity - defined in contrast to the time of God for Israel. It would tend to resist the claim that Jesus is the messiah whose world-rule all Israel participates in. I shall rather argue that Jesus, with his people Israel, is the oneness and indivisibility of God in his work.

3.1.5 Wyschogrod and Segal on the incarnation.

For Michael Wyschogrod 'the divinity of Jesus is...incompatible with true monotheism.' Wyschogrod is of course right to say 'there cannot be any individual...whose relationship to God is unilateral...with the people of Israel not being the decisive presence serving as the purpose of the relation.'²⁶ But this is no basis for saying that God, who is not alone,

accorded its rightful status, this new disclosure becomes in turn instrumental for the understanding of the old, the 'proto-revelation'.

²⁴ Making this accusation are for example Stephen C. Neill & N.T. Wright *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1986* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988; NT *The New Testament and the People of God* London: SPCK 1992, 6-28; Francis Watson *Text, Church and World: Biblical Interpretation in Theological Perspective* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1994, 30-45 and Watson *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1997, 127-68. Marius Reiser *Jesus and Judgement: The Eschatological Proclamation in its Jewish Context* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997, 161 argues that '[T]he decision of the individual for one or other group (that determines one's eschatological lot) assumes greater significance; indeed this is the first moment at which such a thing is demanded at all. Liberal Protestantism, however, saw precisely in this the unique character of Jesus's message.' Susannah Heschel *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1998, 223 points out that '[T]he Jesus of past hundred years has been portrayed primarily in opposition to the allegedly materialistic, superficial and even oppressive Judaism of his day, in recent years Jesus has been portrayed as opposing the Jewish laws of ritual purity.'

²⁵ It is certainly true that, as Ian McFarland 'Christ, Spirit and Atonement' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 3.1 2001 86 argues, that '[I]f Jesus is to be confessed as fully human, his actions must have their source in a distinctly human mind and will'. But this distinctly human mind, will and set of opinions must be related to the mind and *sensus communis* of the host of Israel. To fail to do this is to tolerate a modern concept of mind, a pneumatology of interiority, not publicly contestable or responsible. A theological pneumatology must answer Rogers' demand (3.1.2) that it represents the plurality and community brought into being by the Spirit, so the host of Israel is the source of Jesus' thoughts – that he had learned from them, and thus that he was in a measure their work.

²⁶ Michael Wyschogrod 'A Jewish Perspective on the Incarnation' *Modern Theology* 12 1996, 198 argues that '[T]he Church found God in this Jewish flesh. Perhaps this was possible because God is in all Jewish flesh.' This is not a doctrine of election and freedom, but of substance and therefore necessity. 'Perhaps the Church...could not see this incarnation in the Jewish people but could see it in this one Jew who stood... for his people.'

without company or glory, may not become man, or may not make 'man' the proper predicate of his work. God is Spirit, and as such is able to move freely on both sides of a Creator-creature, divine-human line. Two-natures language is intended to state the doctrine of creation, not problematise it. Such a line is a membrane, not a barrier: the distinction between Creator and creature is of God's making, and is sustained with the single purpose of preparing us to receive him.

Has Wyschogrod determined that God may not be at home in the world, at home in his own work? Is the divine-human or Creator-creature distinction absolute and prior to any divine action, so that this creaturely world is closed to God? Israel may not be considered apart from God. 'By faith' means that Israel is Israel *by association* – association with God. If what is perfect may not be broken is it conceptually coherent to say that Israel was perfect and entire but then ceased to be so? The doctrine of the Church is that Israel will become entire and perfect. Does the supersession debate rest on a protology, and on a failure to understand the eschatological nature of scriptural statement?

Alan Segal also allows that God was found in this Jewish flesh, but that the term 'the form of God' (Philippians 2.6) is ambiguous enough to bring it within the range of the many figures of Jewish apocalypticism.²⁷ The Christian community awarded to Jesus 'the name which is above every name', *Kyrios*, the term used to translate and avoid the tetragrammaton *YHWH*. Philippians 2 says that Christ has the divine *morphe*. But Segal does not want to link this *morphe* to what Paul has to say about God's work taking the *morphe* of suffering and opposing the gentiles. The Christian confession is not only that Jesus took the form of God, but that suffering our opposition is the form God's working took. Against Segal we must say that the form of God is his being with his people, the form of a servant, who works and in his working suffers.²⁸ It is a suffering that must be related to God's ongoing relationship both with the exiled people of his election and the

²⁷ Alan F. Segal 'Paul's Thinking about Resurrection in its Jewish Context' in *New Testament Studies* 44 1998 400-419. 411 Segal believes that '[T]he Christ was depicted as an eternal aspect of divinity which was not proud of its high station but consented to take on human shape and suffer the fate of humanity, even death on a cross... This transformation is followed by the converse, the retransformation into God.' This is to understand the incarnation as reversible and reversed. The relationship of notions of suffering and martyrdom to the idea that God is at work, in and with the diaspora will be discussed in Chapter 4. In 'He who did not spare his own son...' Segal argues that there was pre-Christian use of Isaac's martyrdom, and exegesis did understand martyrology and vicarious atonement. The concept of resurrection is linked to the problem of theodicy raised in the period of the Maccabean revolt, when resurrection was understood to be the reward for martyrdom. Isaac is pre-eminent among the martyrs. The Christians joined the messiah conceptuality to that of the servant who suffers.

²⁸ Wright 'Jesus Christ is Lord: Philippians 2.5-11' in *The Climax of the Covenant* 57-71 and see 4.1 for this argument.

groaning creation. The physical-bodily being of Jesus is not merely enthroned and restored to divine mode, but both enthroned and therefore at work, bearing his people. Segal understands Jesus, Paul and every other visionary to be an ‘incarnation’ of Yahweh.²⁹ But this is an account that can only be made in the absence of discussion of the ongoing history of God's action with Israel - a work that includes bearing the resistance that Israel herself inflicts on God.

But has this New Testament and biblical scholarship properly represented Israel as the servant of this Lord? The starting-point of religious studies is that Israel cannot identify its own object or end, and therefore has no handle on how to lead and rule and sustain its own unity.³⁰ All interrogation of her asks whether Israel is a religion, ethnicity or ethic. Israel must refuse any identification that involves division under these autonomous domains and insist that what Israel does receives its proper definition only from Israel's Lord. Israel is knowable to him, not to any definition offered by the gentile world until that gentile world comes to her through baptism for its own re-definition. In becoming that faithful servant Jesus makes Israel the Son and so inaugurates the rule that Israel must exercise over the world, even in the face of its resistance.

3.2.1 Israel as Son.

The next question we have to ask biblical studies is whether it allows itself the means for this theological definition of Israel as God's ongoing work. We introduced Adam as the son who would not take up the work of God. Although New Testament scholarship has always referred to Adam Christology, it has not found a role for it. I will argue that Jesus has been *made* the Son by the Spirit. The point, James Scott argues, is to provide an account of the becoming of the Son who learned obedience. ‘By ignoring this methodological starting point, Pauline studies currently labors under some confusion about the subject of divine sonship in general.’³¹ This section will ask whether the issue

²⁹ Segal ‘Paul's Thinking about Resurrection in its Jewish Context’ 413 n.21 argues that ‘This glorious body of the Christ is the spiritual body into which the believer will be subsumed, not the physical body of Jesus’.

³⁰ See Gillian Rose *Mourning becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, 86 for a vigorous rebuttal of this charge.

³¹ Scott, James M. *Adoption as Sons of God* Mohr: Tübingen 1992, 267 *Uiothesis*, *being made* a son, ‘is part of the stock of Hellenistic terms of adoption, and as such it denotes ‘adoption as son(s)’ Hence any attempt to translate *uiothesia* in Paul as simply ‘sonship’ sets the study on the wrong foot from the start.’ 268 ‘Christ is the heir of Abraham (Galatians 3.6) and the messianic Son of God promised in 2 Samuel 7.12 and 14 respectively.’ ‘Adoption’ is the appropriate concept for divine sonship. 269 ‘By ignoring this methodological starting point, Pauline studies currently labours under some confusion about the subject of divine sonship in general.’ Despite the argument of Frances M. Young ‘Understanding Romans in the light of 2 Corinthians’ *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48 1991, 434 that ‘Paul will not operate according to the

of holiness and purity can be more closely related to the issue of the production of a Son who is an obedient servant, and so to Israel's cosmology and creation theology.³² This is also to ask whether New Testament studies has not been driven by a continued antipathy to the frankly biological character of what it finds in the bible to maintain a dichotomy of spirit and flesh, that holds Israel's theological claims apart from her biological claims and so to reduce the degree to which her cult looks like a fertility cult. I will suggest that we should understand that biology may be adopted as one idiom and instrument of the Spirit's preparation of many sons.

Does Israel assume that the gentiles will either be attracted or defeated by Israel's own greater fecundity and success at producing sons for Abraham?³³ Does the priestly teaching on Israel's purity and holiness represent the coming into being of this Son, a theology of the coming of the Christ and thus of the coming into being of Adam? In the hope of being corrected by a more adequate account I will attempt to sketch the biological idiom of Israel's political claim. The Israelite who sees semen on the sheets (Leviticus 15.16) sees something more consequential than himself there.³⁴ He sees the life-substance of Israel, the combined presence of all generations, preceding and succeeding. Though it came out of him, it is the life-stuff of Adam and Abraham: it is not his but theirs and it returns to them. The single Israelite is no complete instantiation of Israel and his children are not the affirmation of his individuality, but the gift he must return to the Lord. The Lord gives children, and a man must take them, sew them in his wife, nurture and bring them up, present them to him in the temple where the Lord

patronage system', patronage, adopting sons and making them members of your household is precisely the right concept. *Patronage* means making sons, by elective biology, and 'affiliation' translates *being made* a son.

³² Alexander T.D. 'Messianic Ideology in Genesis' in Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess & Gordon J. Wenham *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts* Carlisle: Paternoster 1995, and Whitsett, Christopher 'Son of God, Seed of David: Paul's messianic exegesis in Romans 2:3-4' *Journal for Biblical Literature* 119,4 661-681, 2000 attempt to make this connection. Interest in the biological idiom of Israel's claim did not continue to serve discussion of Israel's theology, and in the nineteenth century became a separate discipline, that of the history of religions.

³³ The concept of the seed of Abraham is the concept that unites the two testaments. Kraus *Das Volk Gottes* Mohr-Siebeck: Tübingen 1996, 359 argues that 'Vom hier aus gibt es dann einen Oberbegriff, denn Paulus verwendet hat, um die Einheit des alt- und neutestamentlichen Gottesvolkes auszusagen: sperma Abraam.'

³⁴ Jacob Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1 New York: Doubleday 1991, 927-33 talks about the seed only in terms of impurity, not giving semen any theological significance or distinguishing it from any other discharge; Milgrom, Maccoby and Neusner agree that the rules about washing out semen relate to the distinction between life and death, but leaves life and death uninterpreted. This is surely not life as such, gentile life, life held in common with the world, but God's life for Israel. Social anthropology does not share the fastidiousness about sex and reproduction biblical studies has inherited from Christian distaste for talking about the demands and products of bodies. Biblical studies has not yet managed to talk about fertility as motive and explanation for human behaviour.

accepts them back from him, and accepts him by accepting his gift of his children.³⁵ Without children he has no continuing being in Israel. A man's membership of Israel is confirmed by the arrival of the fruit of the seed given to him to plant in his wife. If his children also turn out to be obediently fertile, he is born again, not of a potential intrinsic to the flesh, but of the Seed of Israel. Not all are Israel who are simply born to people who are, or whose parents were, Israel: they are Israel when they are born again of the living and enduring Seed and Spirit.

This seed does not always succeed in making a child for Abraham. The child becomes a son for Abraham when he later himself produces a son who is himself obedient, and himself produces a son and so on. My eschatological reading of Genesis 22 will indicate that the status of the whole line is waiting on the obedience of the very last son, so Israel is a function of the obedience and arrival of the last and completing event of Israel-sonship. The period of seven days (Leviticus 15.13) allows the seed time to come to fruition in the marriage, or to return to the temple. An Israelite went to the temple to show what moral and procreative acts his husbandry of the seed-and-blood of Israel had produced. The semen or menses on the sheet is as much the life of Israel as the blood in the Temple. It must not remain on the sheet, but as long as purification sacrifice has not yet returned it to the Temple where it belongs, it is out of place, and makes impure whoever comes into contact with it. The blood of Israel is not confined to this present generation, but is the function of all generations past and to come. The men of this generation are not of themselves capable of giving their wives children: the men and women together have to have children fathered on them by the patriarchs. The blood is the living and enduring life of Israel, and each individual Israelite must by the observation of purity, demonstrate his obedience to the task of the production of sons for Israel.

3.2.2 Affiliation as the priestly work of the Son

Adam is the father of mankind because Adam is himself re-fathered by the Son of the Father.³⁶ Adam's seed does not succeed in making many obedient sons. But Christ, set

³⁵ Lawrence A. Hoffman *Covenant of Blood: Circumcision and Gender in Rabbinic Judaism* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1996 and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz *The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism* Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1990 provide discussions of paternity. Only gender studies is prepared to talk about reproduction. Nancy Jay *Throughout your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion and Paternity* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1992 argues that sacrifice is the idiom of male reproduction.

³⁶ See Richard B. Hays *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3.1-4.11* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2002, 131-2; James D.G. Dunn *Theology of Paul the Apostle* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1998, 385-79

upstream of Adam, can transform the effect of Adam's death-replicating gene into that of a life-replicating gene. It changes the metabolism so that Adam's fatal metabolic failure is integrated into a larger and more complex metabolism. Here Adam's permanently-activated death-hormone functions healthily at its place in the whole life-generating economy of the God of Israel.

Christ adopts us as his sons, and like a good son presents us to his Father. This sonship is available because Jesus has supplanted Adam from Adam's position as father to a new position as son. Jesus has re-fathered Adam, and is able not only to make sons of us, but to make of us obedient sons, ourselves able to bear sons to the Father. Then he hands back this lordship and fatherhood to his Father, and receives us back from the Father again as brothers. In this relationship what is biological is not prior, but serves as a mode of his determination to be father to us. The relationship into which we are adopted is spiritual, the work of the Spirit. It is the possibility of, and acknowledgement and realisation of the possibility of, that decision of Son for Father and Father for Son by which the Son presents and the Father adopts many sons.

Time is what the Father has for the Son and Son for the Father. The Father and the Son determine that we be both sons and fathers, and live in a generation that succeeds and is succeeded, in time. Our time takes a tragic or narrative form.³⁷ We are bound to exert a lordship and selfhood against our fathers, and have it exerted against us by the generation that succeeds us. The one wish of fathers is to produce sons to keep their name alive in the world.³⁸ To do this the ancestors work with each generation to recycle the material of life. Blood is supplied to the ancestors and it returns as seed, as another generation of sons. Adam christology is a successful response to and take-over of this logic of life in the many formulations of pagan cosmologies. A miasma of seed, spores, yeasts, moulds and rashes constitutes our environment. The regulations of Leviticus 13-15 are dedicated to ensuring that these alien *stoicheia* do not contaminate Israel, but Israel continues to be determined purely by the life of God in the Seed of Israel.

on the discussion that renders *pistis Christou* 'the faithfulness of Christ', rather than 'faith in Christ'. On the genealogy of Jesus, see W.D. Davies & Dale C. Allison *Matthew The International Critical Commentary* volume 1 Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1988, 167-88, and Richard Bauckham *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1990, 326-42, 376-7.

³⁷ See Zizioulas *Being as Communion* 42-52 and the argument of 1.2.2-3 above.

³⁸ See Albertz R. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* Louisville: Westminster 1994, Volume 1, 96-101 on the family cult. According to Hebrews a priest is the man who by continuing the family line is going to do the right thing by his fathers, to ensure their continuation by redeeming them.

3.2.3 The economy of sonship.

In this chapter I will argue that sacrifice represented the commissioning of Israel to the office of steward of creation. The temple sacrifice represents the work of the Son in bringing many sons to the Father. In Chapter 1 I introduced the concept of persons in constitutive relation, and with it those concepts of incorporation and participation that allow that persons make persons present to one another, and may therefore be represented by one another. I suggested that selection, promotion, adoption and representation represent the whole economy of action (*doxa* is comprehended in *ousia*). In the Kantian anthropology in which all already have the full status of persons, there is no room for understanding the being of a person as a work shared amongst many.³⁹ The anthropology does not allow that persons receive their personhood from the trinitarian persons of God, and so rules out the sacrificial, liturgical creation theology and mediation of Israel by which this could happen.⁴⁰ The rationality of sacrifice is dependent on such a view of Israel's commissioning and employment in the persons-formative work of her God. Kant's anthropology might seem to deliver a blow to a representational and substitutionary view of the purpose of sacrifice. E.P. Sanders, for example, argues that ancient Israel did not understand sacrifices to remove the sin of the individual by representation or substitution.⁴¹ In Dalferth's summary 'It is not enough to say he has died instead of us or in the place of us... nor for the sake of us – these are all vicarious, whether legal/penal or sacrificial/cultic. They involve the substitution of one party for the other and these presuppose an ontological individualism.'⁴²

According to Sanders, atonement for Israel was not so much a response to something that had gone wrong, but the whole everyday business by which the temple registered all the status changes through which members of Israel progressed in the course of life.⁴³ Temple sacrifices were not related to individual moral misdemeanours, so were not in the first place about guilt-removal. In Milgrom's description the atonement rituals do not describe a priest atoning an individual Israelite, but the atonement of the Temple itself. Stowers and McLean believe this disallows talk of one

³⁹ In 2.7 I argued that being a person involves multiple roles, in which a person represents other persons in multiply nested conversations and roles without being any the less himself.

⁴⁰ Kant *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 6.72, 6.74. Kant can tolerate no account of hospitality and possession in the constitution of persons. Dalferth I.U. *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte: Zur Grammatik der Christologie* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1994, 237-315 provides an important, yet not comprehensive, theological discussion of sacrifice.

⁴¹ Sanders *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* 474-511.

⁴² I.U. Dalferth 'Christ died for us' in Sykes, Stephen W. *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991, 320.

⁴³ E.P. Sanders *Judaism: Practice and Belief* London: SCM 1992, 112-16.

man atoning for another and so of Jesus taking our place and atoning for us.⁴⁴ Although individuals came to the Temple to have their sins removed, this should be understood as part of the maintenance of the whole Body of Israel, incorporation both as single inaugural event and as regular task.

All New Testament scholarship is determined by the problem created by Kant's rejection of the possibility that one person represents another. German biblical scholarship recognises that it must find an expression of biblical anthropology able to withstand the Kantian criticism of representation.⁴⁵ According to Gese and Stuhlmacher an inclusive event of cultic representation of the people's life before God was effected for Israel when sacrificial blood, the life substance (Lev 17.11), was splashed over the holy objects, in particular the mercy-seat. Blood was the medium that 'brings people to God'.⁴⁶ Worshippers experienced death and resurrection in the death of the animal with whom they identified. Righteousness is not a personal quality gifted to an individual but a cosmic power by which one is brought into the corporate people of God as a result of being freed by baptism from the power of sin and death. Stuhlmacher argues that sins were saved up to be dealt with in yearly instalments. In order to deal with them Jesus was made the *hilasterion*. With Christ, the new age of the righteousness of God has broken through to sweep all sins finally away. Whether *hilasterion* means the event or the site of atonement, the sins of Israel were all dealt with together on that one day in the year. The atonement of the high priest is not merely a technical matter of preparing the place to perform that function, but is the atonement of the whole people.⁴⁷ Missing from the account offered by these scholars is what makes blood symbolic and the meaning of this death obvious. But a theological account cannot remain content with natural symbols. A more theological interpretation of death might suggest that it is that gentile existence from which Israel is redeemed - and which since it is a passing form of existence may be said to be dying.⁴⁸ But this Tübingen scholarship refers to extrinsic theories of symbol,

⁴⁴ Stanley K. Stowers *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* New Haven: Yale University Press 1994, 206-13; B. H. Mclean *The Cursed Christ: Mediterranean Expulsion Rituals and Pauline Soteriology* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1996 and David Seeley *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation* Sheffield: JSOT Press 1990 dismiss theology informed by the sacrificial conceptualities presented by the Old Testament in favour of the portrayal of Christ's death as an example of (Hellenistic) martyrdom in the tradition of the Maccabees. I owe these references to Dan Bailey and Richard Bell.

⁴⁵ Specifically, Janowski and Dalferth on 'the Tübingen response' in 'Sühnopfer' in *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte* 241-83.

⁴⁶ This is the argument of Peter Stuhlmacher *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1992-1999, 316-48; assessed by Dunn *The Theology of the Apostle Paul* 212-23.

⁴⁷ This is argued for by Dan Bailey 'Christ as kapporet' Cambridge PhD thesis 1999.

⁴⁸ See 4.1.1-2.

with little indication of who may determine these.⁴⁹ It transfers the problem from one of atonement to one of hermeneutics and epistemology, rather than of the theological self-understanding of the community addressed and formed by the word of God.

Such resources seem now to be forthcoming from Bernd Janowski and Ingolf Dalferth. Janowski argues that the concept of retribution is not simply a law of revenge.⁵⁰ The deed returns to its doer, not by a closed economy of necessity, but in an economy of response, in which it is not objects that are exchanged, but those forms of action that promote the relatedness of their agents.⁵¹ In Dalferth's view 'the relational ontological structure of the total soteriological event calls for interpretations of the credal statement that Christ has died for us which do justice to the irreducible relationality of the reality expressed.'⁵² 'Identification is reciprocal,' says Dalferth:

Localising something is identifying, not merely describing it... It is a cognitive process in which something is identified to someone in such a way that the addressees of the identification are localised relative to one another.⁵³

We expect the other to situate himself so we can orient ourselves by him. This return of identity is what the concept of *talion* and retaliation refers to. Though *talion* means paying back it does not mean getting your own back, but returning to the other the being and relationship missing from his action towards you, supplying to him what he was not able to supply to you.⁵⁴

To Kant's problem of the irreducibility of the person we may offer the concept of task and office as a solution. In reply to Sanders' claim that Lutheran talk of

⁴⁹ The contributors to Bernd Janowski & Michael Welker *Opfer: Theologische und kulturelle Kontexte* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2000 do not seem to have attempted the sort of creation theology or cosmology required here, or to have learned from Mary Douglas.

⁵⁰ Janowski 'Die Tat kehrt zum Täter zurück': Offene Fragen in Umkreis des "tun-ergehen-Zusammenhangs" in *Die Rettende Gerechtigkeit* Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn 1999 links the concepts of retribution, *talion* and return.

⁵¹ Janowski 'Die Tat kehrt zum Täter zurück' 190-1.

⁵² Dalferth 'Christ died for us' 320.

⁵³ Dalferth *Theology and Philosophy* 204.

⁵⁴ Janowski 'Der Tat kehrt zurück' calls it 'a category of social interaction that refers to our acting-to-and-for-one another in a complex economy in which we may have confidence that, despite all appearances, there will be justice and our being will be returned to us.' I have called this nexus of act-and-reaction (*Tun-ergehen Zusammenhang*) an economy of response. Bruce J. Malina *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* London: SCM 1983 argues for such a single nexus, an economy of honour. René Girard *Violence and the Sacred* Baltimore: John Hopkins Press 1977 argues for an economy of emulation or rivalry. Some part of the theological tradition opposes ransom or penalty because it believes this punishment or penalty can only be owed to Satan. Yet the concept of ransom belongs to the perichoretic metaphysic, referred to in Chapter 1, within which we all own and possess and account for each other and bear account to each other. When this metaphysic is abandoned, ransom is certainly a problem, but so also is representation. Payability to *someone else* is problematic precisely because the status of *anyone else*, of *others* as such, is a problem. The work of Janowski and Dalferth complements the scholarship of the faithfulness of Christ (*pistis Christou*) which understands that persons are made by mutual constitution (determined by the decision of Christ), for which see Hays *The Faith of Jesus Christ*.

representation and substitution is alien to Israelite sacrifice, I suggest we should see Old Testament talk of atonement of place as solution, not problem. If we make a hard distinction between individuals, and persons defined by relation, we can say that Israelites came to the Temple as individuals and left as persons. It is precisely individuality, the state of being with insufficient relationship, that was atoned for by the supply of relationship with God. It is not about swapping places. The Son of Man comes to us in our place, but he occupies a bigger definition of the place than we do, so we are not pushed out of it, but out of our way of occupying it and into his way of occupying it. Place should be understood in terms of fibres that can be parted and more space woven in. We are given place, and given more place, and the means to occupy it, so by a process of *paideia* we are levered up into a fuller and more complex appropriation of the place God has for us.⁵⁵ I said that Tübingen scholarship refers to a concept of symbol. I argued in Chapter 2 that symbols have meanings in structures, and structures grow out of the life of a community, and have meanings because they have functions, they do things, transform things and open and close ways of life within that community. There cannot be an account of persons without an account of the world, which understands the world as sets of regularities and local purposes. In the course of any theological account of persons, the world is set into and transformed by an eschatological context, in which it is identified and received as creation, the proper place of creatures. As Janowski points out, what we are given is not an object, but a new action, a new behaviour and behaviour-world.⁵⁶ Man is given a place and a job to do in it.

3.3.1 Israel and her king.

The next question to ask is about place. Has New Testament studies found a way to accommodate Israel's claim that God has given the world to Israel as her place and her mandate? Can New Testament studies read the Old Testament as Israel's response to and refusal of the empires of the world and thus understood cosmology – a doctrine of creation and possession – as the whole idiom of Israel's polity, politics and self-consciousness? Or has New Testament studies only succeeded in making the New Testament a discussion of the Hellenic and Roman empires, without understanding that

⁵⁵ Dalferth *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte* 306 refers to a 'creaturely place'. 'Es wird auch der personale Charakter des Heilhandelns Gottes in Jesus Christ gänzliche unterschlagen, also verdunkelt, daß es nicht nur oder vor allem um das geht, was Jesus tat oder litt, sondern um das, was er in seinem Tun und Leiden *ist*: der geschöpferische Ort der sich selbst erschließenden Gegenwart der schöpferischen und Neue schaffenden Liebe Gottes.'

⁵⁶ Janowski 'Die Tat kehrt zum Täter zurück' 190.

the Torah resists all foreign political claims equally? If New Testament studies reads the New Testament as a separate testament, and in deliberate ignorance of all the previous and subsequent centuries of Israel's address to the gentiles, it will treat the first century as though Israel had never encountered gentiles before and thus perhaps as utterly vulnerable to Hellenism. We must look for a less Marcionite New Testament studies, better able to contribute to a politically more sophisticated theology.

N.T. Wright has the strongest version of the meaning of messiah, and so of the claim of Israel. The all-embracing royal and religious claims of Caesar are directly challenged by the equally all-embracing claim of Israel's God. 'The more Jewish we make Paul's 'gospel', the more it confronts directly the pretensions of the Imperial cult, and indeed all other paganisms whether 'religious' or 'secular'. It is because of Jewish monotheism that there can be 'no king but God'.⁵⁷ 'The Pauline *euangelion* is based firmly in Judaism; at the same time, and indeed precisely for this reason, it functions as the royal announcement which challenges the pagan principalities and powers.'⁵⁸ Wright holds together covenant and apocalyptic. 'The real apocalypse has taken place in the resurrection of the messiah Jesus but that event can only be understood and its significance elaborated through an exploration of the covenant to Abraham.'⁵⁹ Israel had a clear idea what restoration would look like, and what has happened to Jesus unmistakably fits this idea. 'Judaism in Paul's day, as all Jews knew, had not in fact been redeemed within its own terms of expectation'.⁶⁰ Paul sees that God has really given Israel justice. Jesus had won this restoration which was clearly what was promised to, but not won by, anyone else in Israel. According to Wright, Paul realised that Jesus was therefore:

that which his supporters had claimed, namely Israel's messiah; that this Jesus, the crucified and risen messiah of Israel, was now enthroned as Lord of all, Jew and Gentile alike; that these events were indeed the inauguration of 'the age to come'...As a result of this whole complex of thought (complex for us, reconstructing it; plain sailing for a first century Pharisee) the pagan idolatry of the world has been decisively defeated, and that those who adhered to it - that is,

⁵⁷ N.T. Wright 'Gospel and Theology in Galatians' in L. Ann Jervis & Peter Richardson *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N Longenecker* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1994, 228 'When their god, Jahweh, acted within history to deliver his people, the spurious gods of the heathen would be defeated. If and when Jahweh set up his own king as the true ruler, his true earthly representative, all other kingdoms would be confronted with their rightful overlord.' Wright's argument depends on the conceptual henotheism argued for by Seitz *Word without End* 255. I shall use this conceptual henotheism in Chapter 6 to argue against a dichotomy of religious language and non-religious language that would confine theological claims to a domain of untestable and therefore non-public religious discourse.

⁵⁸ Wright 'Gospel and Theology in Galatians' 228.

⁵⁹ Wright 'Gospel and Theology in Galatians' 232.

⁶⁰ Wright 'Gospel and Theology in Galatians' 234.

the gentiles - were to be summoned to give allegiance to this strange and subversive Jewish messiah.’⁶¹

Wright argues that Jesus is the arrival of Yahweh in a world of real and political conflict, hence ‘the gospel of Christ’ – of the ruler named Jesus.

The temple was the court of the great king who gives justice; the nations were attracted to Jerusalem because it was their belief that there was justice for them there. But the first century leadership of Israel had managed to create a divided, oppressed and therefore unclean nation: the temple had become the possession of Israel the envious elder brother. Jesus enacted Israel's king riding into Jerusalem, simultaneously in vindication of Israel, and in judgement of her, the revenge of the gentiles against her.⁶² The Temple cleansing was a claim to kingship, judgement and revenge. The gentiles who crucified Jesus and destroyed the Temple were doing God's work, so God was acting here, publicly and politically. As the gentiles represent all that is cursed and separated, dead and dead-making, the arrival of the true Yahweh-Israel took the form of Israel hanging curse-like on a tree. The messiah has been *gentiled*, and has *gentiled* Israel, handing her over to the gentiles.⁶³

3.3.2 Jesus inaugurates the rule of Israel.

Israel is God's word of refusal to the gentiles. God's word is No. Israel can really be said to speak and to be this speech-act in which she is distinguished from the gentiles as a holy nation because this is not hers alone but God's word. Israel may deny her election but God's word does not return to him empty. Israel participates in the defeat of the gentiles, and is their new hope.⁶⁴

Israel is the Lord of the nations. It is not by chance that Israel finds herself subjected to the nations and fighting for her identity, always under the threat of absorption which would make her indistinguishable from them and no longer holy. The

⁶¹ Wright ‘Gospel and Theology in Galatians’ 234. Wright represents the exception to the charge of Oliver O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, 128 that biblical theology succumbs ‘to the persistent Western temptation (evident in atonement theories from Anselm to Moberly, and not excusing the excellent Grotius) to abstract the death of Christ and interpret it on its own, thereby radically depoliticising the central saving event of the gospel.’

⁶² N.T. Wright *Jesus and the Victory of God* London: SPCK 1996, 639 Jesus came into Jerusalem at Passover, on a donkey, and crying for Jerusalem, ‘the symbol and embodiment of YHWH's return to Zion’.

⁶³ Wright ‘Curse and Covenant: Galatians 3.10-14’ in *The Climax of the Covenant*, 151 ‘The crucifixion of the Messiah is...the *quintessence* of the curse of exile, and its climatic act.’

⁶⁴ The relationship is not causal. Israel does not change anything or cause anything, but she is the medium in which everything is made utterly different, as I describe in 4.4.1. I argue with Wright that Israel

new Christian form of Israel's being is distinguished by the realisation that what is significant is not that Israel is oppressed by this or that nation, but that Israel has to bear all the nations. She may not fight or disown them, but may only confess herself to be, in fact, both servant and lord of all. The messiah who is king of Israel is king of the nations too, rival to Caesar and to every individual and institutional world-hegemony: he is king of kings.⁶⁵ To make the same point again, if Jesus is messiah, all Israel is messiah. Christ and Israel are not yet synonyms, but when the new Adam is at once one and many, they will be. Warnings against trinitarianism rely on an individualism that would leave God without servants or speech. The first clause of the Decalogue that God is alone and is the only God, does not clash with the equal imperative that his servants are his, and have no identity other than the identity he gives them. The Spirit, in the history of Israel, built and assembled one full man, and when that man was successfully entirely with God, creature and Creator together on the same bench, the Holy Spirit was able to replicate his character in a new community that spans and unites heaven and earth.

3.4.1 Who can read the scriptures?

The question of who can read the scriptures is the question of who can read Israel. Jon Levenson puts a strong version of the difference between the scripture reading of the two communities. In Jewish reading of scripture, Jewish history has wrongly come to overtake Jewish belief as determinative of Jewish being.⁶⁶ Scripture is narrative, the live and continuing history of this people in biblical and post-biblical periods, which has to be lived and performed correctly again by each generation. The telling of the law as story belongs together with the keeping of the law as commandment. 'Nothing is more delicate than the interplay of universalism and particularism in traditional Jewish theology. Take away the theology, and the interplay disappears or mutates.'⁶⁷

But Levenson plays down the ontological difference expressed by the doctrine of election. That 'Israel was not chosen on merit' is not at issue.⁶⁸ What is at issue is whether we can and even must say that having been chosen and tested, Israel becomes different from the nations. This would involve arguing about what constitutes evidence

participates in the defeat of the gentiles, and against Wright that the obedience on the cross of one member of Israel is 'retroactively' causative of the obedience of all Israel.

⁶⁵ See 6.5

⁶⁶ Levenson J.D. 'Why Jews are not Interested in Biblical Theology' in Jacob Neusner, Baruch A. Levine & Ernest S. Frerichs *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* Minneapolis: Fortress 1987, 281-307.

⁶⁷ Levenson J.D. 'The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism' in Mark G. Brett *Ethnicity and the Bible* Leiden: Brill 1996, 169.

⁶⁸ Levenson 'The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism' 159.

for this transition, or who is to decide what constitutes such evidence. Do the gentiles have the means to recognise the real and growing holiness of this people? The actual and real superiority of the Jews is not the possession of the Jews, and may be empirically as inaccessible to them as it is to the gentiles, yet it must be their confession. On the other hand, can we speak of difference without understanding that Jews and gentiles compete for the good and may indeed be measured against each other? Is Jewish reluctance to speak more clearly on the doctrine of election a matter of good taste? Is it bad taste to do anything but leave the matter alone, or must Christian theology assert itself to express the difference? Israel is not claiming to know only what any nation really might know, but is claiming that the nations fail to worship the one God and his one covenant and law, worshipping instead many other rival gods by whom they are held in misery.

Is there one set of scriptures shared between two communities, Jewish and Christian? Has one of them better right to these scriptures by virtue of having acquired them first, such that the community which came to them later, has a weaker claim, or even represents a falsification of them? Alternatively, are there two distinct sets of scriptures for two communities, for Jews the Jewish scriptures, and for Christians the Old and New Testaments? In 'Why Jews are not Interested in Biblical Theology', Levenson has argued that biblical theology is in fact always Protestant exegesis rather than engagement with Jews or Jewish scripture.⁶⁹ Is it the case that the Old Testament is Jewish and the New Testament Christian, so there is the Hebrew Bible, but no book called the Old Testament? Is the inclusion of the Torah and Prophets in the Christian scriptures even a 'scandalous annexation'?⁷⁰ Is Levenson right in saying that neither Jewish nor Christian scholarship is anything but very marginally either Jewish or Christian, both neutered by a third worldview that reigns in universities? The extent to which the Christians read the Old Testament is precisely the extent to which they are Christian, and the extent to which they read the New Testament to the exclusion of the Old Testament is the extent to which they are Marcionite rather than Christian. Do students of the Christian scriptures too glibly refer to their discipline as New Testament studies, failing to realise how much we are all the unwitting students of Gabler, de Wette and others responsible for the disciplinary division between New Testament and Old

⁶⁹ Levenson 'Why Jews are not Interested in Biblical Theology' 303-4, and Levenson 'Theological Consensus or Historicist Evasion?' in Brooks & Collins *Hebrew Bible or Old Testament?* Roland E. Murphy 'Old Testament/Tanakh - Canon and Interpretation' in Brooks & Collins 12-27 rightly argues that the Hebrew bible and the Old Testament are different books, and that this is a question of canon, a fact of literary description, not a matter that historical criticism can determine.

Testament scholarship? Does this disciplinary division divide the indivisible witness and testament of the one God?⁷¹

3.4.2 Who can tell the story of the Son?

Next we must ask who is able to tell Israel's story and recount the scriptures such that they are the Word of God that not only goes out to man, but returns bringing with it man to God. The question of who can read the scriptures is the question of who can read Israel. If, as Leo Purdue believes, narrative (literature) is replacing history as the major interpretative paradigm for scripture, the question becomes one of 'Who has the right to any scriptural narrative?'⁷² Stephen Fowl asks 'Who can read Abraham's story?'⁷³ Fowl argues that every narrative places its teller and hearers, so a story cannot be told by just anybody, but only by those constituted by it. Whoever can tell this story must know how it ends, and to do this they must be able to distinguish themselves from the story, such that they can tell it - it is not just the sum of the things they are. The God who raised one of our number from the dead can tell our story in such a way as to make it not necessary, so our failures do not become finally definitive of us. God is both audience of the story we tell about ourselves, and its judge and corrector who can improve on our endings, turning our disaster into redemption.⁷⁴ This, I will argue, makes the story of the collapse of mediation a warning story, not one the truth of which is finally settled. The task of telling the story of Israel must be accompanied by a separate conceptual work that maintains the language of the story in good order.⁷⁵ Such conceptual work Israel calls the law. The story and the law are in mutually constitutive relationship. The law

⁷⁰ This is the suggestion of Hans-Georg Geyer 'Solus Christus' in Klaus Wengst & Gerhard Sass *Ja und Nein: Christliche Theologie im Angesicht Israels* Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener 1998, 16.

⁷¹ Christopher R. Seitz 'Two Testaments and the Failure of One Tradition-History' in *Figured Out: Typology and Providence in Christian Scripture* Louisville Westminster John Knox 2001 discusses the unity of this witness.

⁷² Leo G. Purdue *The Collapse of History: Reconstructing Old Testament Theology* Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1994, 232-4. The different metaphors of NT studies and early Christianity derive from the different hermeneutical histories of the two disciplines. NT studies relate to text as the record of history. But without salvation history or teleology, can there be history? Can NT studies work on the paradigm of history if it has ruled out talk of God's dealings with man? See 4.4 *Law and accommodation*.

⁷³ Stephen E. Fowl 'Who can read Abraham's Story?' in *Engaging Scripture: A Model for Theological Interpretation* London: Blackwell 1998, 134 points out that '[T]he internal coherence of Paul's reading presupposes and requires that Abraham's story be read within the context of an *ecclesia*.'

⁷⁴ Seitz *Word Without End* 11 argues that '[H]istorical-critical methods and hermeneutics of assent will stand outside and fail to grasp that God is reading us, not we him.'

⁷⁵ In 5.1.2 I argue that exegesis must understand itself to be in conversation both with dogmatics, as the tradition of exegesis, and with philosophy as the work of referring the conceptuality of exegesis and dogmatics to the discipline of wider public speech.

makes holy the community, and only the holy community can tell its story in a way that corresponds to God's account of it.

New Testament scholarship increasingly approaches scripture as commentary on other scripture. Richard Hays argues that the reader is required to interpret a citation or allusion by recalling aspects of the original context not explicitly quoted. In this manner scripture comes to inform all the instincts and imagination of its readers.⁷⁶ It is the sons who may read the scriptures and tell the story of Israel, but equally reading the scripture makes a son of you.⁷⁷ Narrative, parable and enacted symbol are means to conceptualise the scripture-reading in which audiences find themselves not only implicated but constituted.⁷⁸ Parable-telling obliges listeners to assess for themselves which roles in the scriptures they are involuntarily playing out, and thus provides an opportunity to identify which story is going to end badly, and to swap to the winning side in the history of Israel. These stories are not mere entertainment but the whole grammar which allows that society to say and do some things and not others.⁷⁹ This performative hermeneutic of echoes and resonances relies on a single world-fabric of explanatory memes set in teleology and narrative, so it is a theory about an affective continuum that is a function of all that is said within it. For the sake of our comprehension of the bible these scholars are building a theory about the cement that holds a society together and makes it a single albeit warring entity.⁸⁰

New Testament studies approaches scripture as text, but before the appearance of reader theory, dealt with texts as though they were things with essences which we reach by stripping away the exterior. But a text is not a simple object. It is a fabric of associations and relations, which must, in the case of the scriptures, be related to the determination of the persons of the trinity to share their sociality by making persons of

⁷⁶ Hays, Richard B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* New Haven: Yale University Press 1989; Scott J. Hafemann 'Paul, Moses and the History of Israel' in Evans, Craig A. & James A. Sanders *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* Sheffield: JSOT Press 1993, and N.T. Wright *The New Testament and the People of God* 137-43 and *Jesus and the Victory of God* 133-44 set out similar hermeneutics of texts and reading communities in mutual constitution.

⁷⁷ Scott *Adoption as Sons of God* 268 argues that 'Christ is *the* heir of Abraham (Gal 3.6) and *the* messianic Son of God promised in 2 Sam 7.12 and 14 respectively...Believers who are thus baptised into the messianic Son of God and take up his very cry of 'Abba' to the Father (Gal 4,6) participate with him in the Davidic promise of divine adoption.'

⁷⁸ See Fowl *Engaging Scripture* 75-91, 113-19 for similar argument.

⁷⁹ See Wright *Jesus and the Victory of God* 125-44 for this argument.

⁸⁰ Despite the new interest in performance, in honour and in speech acts, Hays, Wright and Fowl have not bought far into the philosophy of performance, but still hold most stock in the voluntarist philosophy of reflection where the effective assumption is that a fabric of obligations, expectations, narratives, and forms of contracting-together is truer of first century society than of our own because moderns are not in the same way the creatures of narrative and relationship.

us.⁸¹ We cannot strip away the relationship to find what is beneath either text or persons. Questions about the identity of the embodied person of Jesus, the Son who sits at the Father's right hand can be answered only by pointing to events of relationship of Father and Spirit. Jesus is the source and definition of all that relationship and history that he names Israel.⁸² It is our task to establish an account that understands scripture as form of action initiated by God and in which God brings up Israel. This we started in Chapter 2 and will return to in Chapter 6.

3.4.3 Supersession and dialogue.

Why has the Church called this testament *Old*?⁸³ It could perhaps be that it was from the beginning, original and therefore genuine. Because it is the original testament it is the actual and continuing basis of creation and re-creation, it is ever alive and new, and makes all things new. The structure and logic of this house – which determines what is possible in it – was laid down as the house was built. Any other logic or testament written later, unrelated to the event of its building, is spurious. This testament is ever alive because it is that covenant and economy within which the world was built and by which it is sustained in life and allowed to come to no ending other than that that satisfies the original testator. The *new* testament is an introduction to the scriptures written for gentiles, a special form of attachment whereby gentiles are brought into compatibility with the Jewish scriptures and thus able to draw life and sustenance from them. Of course, a testament is the work of a testator, the witness of someone who witnesses to himself.⁸⁴

Does reading the bible and offering any summary of its contents by, for example, taking one concept – salvation history or covenant – as central and confessional, do violence to the plurality of what is there? Does it impose a limit on the communities that

⁸¹ Webster 'The dogmatic location of the canon' *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 43,1 2001 26 argues that 'Paying attention to the canon as ecclesial concept may help extract a theological account of the Scripture from giving too formal or juridical an account of the relation of the canon to the church by stressing that canonicity is best understood in terms of its function in 'establishing and governing certain networks of relationships' (quoting Fowl *Engaging Scripture*, 3).'

⁸² See 3.6.1 on the ascended God-man.

⁸³ Watson *Text and Truth* 179-80 argues that it is called the Old testament in relation to the New, but also to some degree because the New testament brings something not present in the Old testament. Watson asks whether Childs is setting the Old Testament alongside the new 'in a relationship of pure simultaneity' and whether this threatens their proper difference. Seitz 'Christological Interpretation of Texts and Trinitarian Claims to Truth' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52 1999 asks whether Watson is able to establish that the Old Testament is determinative of the meanings of the New, albeit that the meanings of the New may not be read out of the Old apart from the New.

may read it and be liberated by it? Are von Rad or Brevard Childs, or is any Christian reading, attempting to bring the variety of the material in the biblical text under a control not theirs to impose? Walter Brueggeman wants to maintain in complete freshness the admission that God's action is violent, sheerly other and bafflingly unknowable.⁸⁵ Yet one aspect of this violent and unknowable action of God is that it obliges us to say that it is surprising and alarming not only because God is unknowable, but much more because God is knowable.

It is not in the gift either of Christianity or of Judaism to prevent itself making too expansive or too modest a reading, or to prevent itself from effectively ruling out the real and different reading the other community makes. Any reading of the Old Testament runs the risk of being a reduction of it and a closing of the possibilities of reading the Hebrew bible. Any reading of the Hebrew bible risks being a closure of the possibilities of reading the Old Testament. Has academic biblical studies decided that the community which wrote the scriptures, and did so for its own benefit, is the community from whose clutches this text must be taken? Is it the mission of biblical studies to rescue the biblical texts from the Christian community?⁸⁶ But neither the Christian nor Jewish community, neither half of the single community of God, is its own possession. The Old Testament is not lost in the New Testament, is not diminished or threatened by or forced into it, for amongst other things, the New Testament is the teaching that God is not here, and the end is not yet.

Is not a chief part of the unaccountable, and therefore perhaps violent, action of God that he elects a people? Might it not be that it is precisely the elect who lead the protest about this action? Israel might well try to find some less conspicuous form of being. It is unaccountable that God chooses, and he chooses a number. It is no more reasonable that he choose many than that he choose few, or one rather than none. This is scandalous to that protological ontology of supersessionism that understands only that, because God is one and humankind plural, God can only represent a threat to that plurality. The question of who has the right to read which scriptures reflects the politics

⁸⁴ Lindbeck 'Postcritical Canonical Interpretation' in Seitz & Greene-McCreight *Theological Exegesis* argues that Childs' use of the concept of witness must be augmented by the narrative-symbolic approach, represented by Hays, and the authorial discourse approach, exemplified by Wolterstorff.

⁸⁵ Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* 359-99.

⁸⁶ Markus Bockmühl 'To Be or Not to Be': The Possible Futures of New Testament Scholarship' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51 1998 290 makes the criticism that P. Davies wants to confiscate the bible from the community that owes its existence to it. Biblical studies must always be tempted to claim the bible as its exclusive object.

of twentieth century Jewish-Christian dialogue.⁸⁷ Some scholarship has preferred to read the New Testament as a Greco-Roman phenomenon rather than as an expression of Israel's cult to avoid trespassing on Jewish scholarship or religious sensibilities.⁸⁸ Anti-supersessionism may become so scrupulous that it becomes a falsification of Jewish theology against which the New Perspective on Paul scarcely prevails.⁸⁹

We have asked whether the scholarship of dialogue may not represent a playing down of the scandalous particularity of Israel's status, and a refusal of the doctrine of Israel's election. Can New Testament scholarship join the notions of suffering and martyrdom to the idea that God is at work, and at work in and with the diaspora and therefore still at work today? Is the New Testament the outworking of the political theology and cosmology of the Old Testament? This is surely required by the theological claim that Israel's work is directed towards the world and that a public claim on the world is intrinsic to the identity of Israel. In asking about the doctrine of election as a doctrine about God and his servant I have asked whether Israel has an autonomous status and no responsibility to the nations, or whether Israel under God must be involved in dialogue and contest with the nations. Now we must ask about the resistance represented by Western being to the doctrine that takes the form of the Western understanding of time.

Israel is the eschatological working of God. Israel may not be separated from God to be analysed under alien criteria. Israel cannot be accounted either as singular or plural until God is accounted the determinative member of Israel. If there are two, and one is perfect, both are perfect, for the perfect one perfects the other. The obedient priest sets his hand on the head of the creature, supplying what the creature lacks, so he

⁸⁷ I argue in 5.1 and 6.2-3 that all reading should be understood as political claim.

⁸⁸ The question is whether the New Testament is a Jewish or Greco-Roman book. Hafemann S. 'Paul and his Interpreters' in Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin & Daniel G. Reid *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* Leicester: IVP 1993, 678 'The fundamental issue since to be resolved in Pauline studies is the determination of the primary religious or theological context within which Paul's thought is to be understood. This is the great watershed among students of Paul...one's view of Paul will be determined, above all, by whether one interprets his letters, predominantly against the Greco-Roman philosophical and religious world of Paul's day, as Bultmann argued over fifty years ago, or in the light of the Hellenistic-Jewish world of the first century and its scriptures, as Adolf Schlatter proposed in the early decades of this century.'

⁸⁹ The work of Malina, Crossan, and Girard and some liberation theologians, may be said to be based on the accusation that rabbinic Judaism had become an oppressive regime from which Jesus was defending the exploited. Susannah Heschel *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1998, 232 criticises Käsemann for making Jesus who 'cannot be integrated into the background of Jewish piety of his time' into this sort of figure suffering an oppression – inevitably imposed by Jews. The old polemical opposition of law and grace has been replaced by the opposition of purity and compassion.' Perrin's criterion of dissimilarity – the authenticity of a NT teaching ascribed to Jesus determined by uniqueness, 241 'found not in the things he shares with his contemporaries but in the things wherein he differs from them' is the principle driving the scholarship of the historical Jesus.

no longer lacks anything.⁹⁰ This is the relation of the Creator and his creature. The activity of many members of Israel together make the One. They do not merely symbolise him or stand in for him but are adopted by the Spirit as the constituents from which the One is assembled. They stand in for him in the sense that they are proved to have been really practising, waiting, and by being with him by his Spirit, becoming part of him. Thus eschatologically and retrospectively, all those in the history of scripture who appear to have been simply waiting for something to happen were in fact waiting faithfully and were being built together to become the faithful witness. On the modern view we steadily increase our distance from the first century event of Jesus Christ. But Israel is not contained by the past. The survival of the Jewish people is evidence of God's faithfulness, and the guarantee of this re-definition of this time as the joint time of Israel and God, into which the peoples of the world are also called and gathered.

How successful are Jewish scholars at the demythologisation of this time of modernity? Is there a Jewish eschatology? Is the history of the West the history of the supplanting of the election of this people, the specific people of God's choosing, with a generalised version by which God's action was abstracted to meaninglessness? The idea of progress was the beginning of the reduction of the people of Israel to the idea of Israel, and the turning of the idea against Israel to oust her. When time is used to name the relationship of God and Israel, it must be understood to be determined by their movements towards each other. Israel grows into the space God provides, for God on the trinitarian conception is not only agent but the host and enabler of all other agents. It is because God came to Israel, that it can be said that Israel comes to God. Then we can say that time is nothing but the determination of God for Israel and Israel for God, and this is the ground of possibility for a world of agency.

3.5 The work of God.

This chapter inquires into the relation of the two doctrines of God's immediate work of election and his mediate work of making holy. It attempts to understand each as the basis and expression of the other. God is the mediation of his work, so it may be said to be both mediate and immediate. It argues that God is a worker, that he works a people to become participants in his work, and that Israel's liturgical task is the labour of imagining, modelling and preparing for the new creation, and so of participating in its arrival. Israel will become God's co-worker in the creation. It discusses Sabbath and

⁹⁰ See 3.7.4

eschatology as concepts for God's work. It provides an account of the resistance to the work of God in the form of the son who would not work, the man described by the history of Western secularisation who seeks no participation in the work and working of God but succeeds in establishing no alternative economy.

Israel prevents all forms of human being from becoming determinative of God's creation other than the form he intends for it. Israel represents the knitting together of the various ends of the gentile world into the single end God has for the world as creature of his economy. Israel's theology is therefore creation theology. God speaks and is heard, and the world returns his speech. The Word of God halts, defeats, breaks up, re-gathers and re-employs the words of the world and returns them to God as his Word. All other rival words are merely estranged creatures of God. Because they belong to God's estate, it is God's logic that, unknown to them, will come to inform them so that they are no longer opponents but creatures. Those who consume the Lord's substance live off his estate, participate in his work and gain the economy of action he intends for them.

3.5.1 The hospitality of the estate.

The question of being is the question of to whom the economy of being belongs, and thus a question of the identity of its creator and his ability to sustain it against rival economies.⁹¹ Israel is servant of her lord inasmuch as she takes up her work and place as steward of the economy of his creation. The doctrine of creation therefore entails that it is Israel's task to host the gentiles. Israel is God's servant and as such is lord of the gentiles. Israel must bring the gentiles into the house of her Lord, providing them with the support and supplying them with the being he intends for them. Life is the specific life a particular lord and his economy supplies. There is no life in general or life outside one or other lordship. The rationale of Israel's holiness and purity teaching is to witness to Israel's freedom from the claims of other lordships and forms of life, and that this freedom derives from her office as servant of God. The exercise of this hospitality involves allowing its recipients also to become participants in it. Their host gives his clients the means to play host and return hospitality.⁹² Lordship is not about the simple

⁹¹ O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 148 believes that 'If one of the three elements of political authority could be seen as privileged in Israel is must surely be that of possession.'

⁹² Patrick D. Miller 'Israel as host to strangers' in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology* JSOTS Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2000 on this hospitality. Bruce D. Chilton *Feast of Meanings: Eucharistic theologies from Jesus through Johannine Circles* Leiden: Brill 1994, 50 believes that Jesus taught that what is offered should be and be seen to be one's property. Israel is the tenant of the vineyard, and is given talents to invest in it.

exercise of domination, but the exercise of hosting and bringing up people into the form of life enabled by that economy. Who will, by successfully hospitable dominion, be confirmed in the task of stewardship of land and people?

In Israel's cosmology it is Israel herself who works the ecosystem of the world. The world does not work without her.⁹³ Sacrifice displays the fruits of the obedient husbandry of the land given to Israel, amongst which fruit must be accounted the well-being of all members of Israel. Israelites understand that they host and feed each other. Food is always someone's property and invitation to eat; nourishment is inseparable from the obligation to play host and have your property affirmed to you by sharing it with the poor.⁹⁴ In the concept of bread is included all the work of making and keeping the land fertile, of planting and harvesting that is required to put bread on the table when the guest arrives. All food is accompanied by a set of obligations which by eating we make ourselves subject to. Food is related to the possession, control and the constitution of our own body. If we eat his bread, his work enters and constitutes us, and we become his. God works the world - it does not produce bread for us of itself.⁹⁵

3.5.2 Liturgy as work.

The sacrifice, worship and teaching of Israel constitute a unity. We will approach them by means of the concepts of performance and commentary. Teaching took place in the synagogues and the courts of the Jerusalem temple: rabbinic colleges addressed hermeneutical problems in the same spirit of healthy competition as modern interpreters.⁹⁶ Teaching took place in the cloisters, and sacrificing at the centre of the temple. All action was watched, commented on and served to determine the next round of action and the discernment of scripture. Scripture involved the work of writing, copying and collating, teaching and learning by rote by the interpretative apparatus of the

⁹³ In 5.1-2 I argue that the temple generates the productivity of the land and generation of sons.

⁹⁴ Jacob Neusner 'Judaism after the destruction of the temple' in John H. Hayes & J. Maxwell Miller *Israelite and Judaeon History* London: SCM 1977. I argue in 5.2 that the land is a metonym for all the persons that live on it and the ecosystem that binds land and people to each other as creatures of God; the Creator is householder and husbander of his property and estate and his land and its product counts as his substance and being.

⁹⁵ Peder Borgen *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writing of Philo* Leiden: Brill 1965 Jesus's response to the disciples in John 4.32 'I have bread' is that he is not ready to sit down and eat, to be Lord and head of the table, for he is still a servant working to bring to the table another, not-yet-gathered set of people.

⁹⁶ See Sanders *Judaism* 170-82; Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism* 9 argues that 'The bearer of revelation whether priest or prophet (or both) is almost never properly independent of the cult.' C. Rowland *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* SPCK 1982, 318 shows how the diversity of opinion from the second-century rabbinic debates is indicated by the story of the four rabbis who entered the garden, only one of whose hermeneutic procedures allowed him to survive in it.

oral law.⁹⁷ Ritual and scripture constituted a single work of the formation of this people. This single work and tradition did not cease either before the first century, or subsequent to it.⁹⁸

Temple ritual interpreted scripture. The congregation of Israel assembled before the high priest. In the high priest the congregation saw God in the form of his servant, and in the congregation the priest saw God, in the form of his servant.⁹⁹ Each took one part of the conversation of the Father and the Son, and repeated the conversation of God into which they themselves were being incorporated. Each aided the other into the role and office of obedient servant. God elects and transforms this conversation to his own speech and work. Israel understands itself to be both standing opposite God and sitting with him, linked in these two idioms by the whole economy of God's action.

It is Israel's liturgical labour to participate in this conversation of Father and Son. Apocalyptic is one mode of Israel's formation in this participation and its dramaturgy. The Father speaks, and the Son hears and receives his speech. The Father tells those he intends to add to his Son, about his Son. The Son is telling those he wants to present to the Father about his Father. God is telling us about himself in the third person. In this way he draws and assembles us into his narration, so the story of God's action is a story about our coming into his action, and this narration constitutes the two-dimensional form of our coming to participate in this action. The action of God in telling, hearing and receiving constitutes the whole economy in which we will receive our being. God's telling us about himself, in the story of himself and his servant, is his means of letting us find our identity and place in this servant, and so become that servant. The story gives us a place, office and work. God tells us about God by playing alternately his role and ours in order that we come to play our role for ourselves.¹⁰⁰ By this telling and acting out Israel is drawn into the character and action of God.

⁹⁷ According to Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism* 98 God himself has taught Torah to the tribes of Israel, and he spends three hours a day studying Torah. 113 'The idea of the dynamic presence of revelation in both written Torah and oral tradition is present at least *in nuce* already prior to the fall of Jerusalem.' 30 n40. Willi-Plein 'regards the angel as almost a hypostasis of interpretation.' Riesner 'Jesus as Preacher and Teacher' in Henry Wansbrough *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition* Sheffield: JSOT Press 1991, 191 argues that 'One cannot overstress the importance of the synagogal teaching system as a background for the formation and transmission of the Gospel tradition'.

⁹⁸ Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism* 61 argues that 'There are sufficient indications to show that at least some form of priestly or Levitical 'prophecy' continued in the post-exilic age.' David E. Aune *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1983, 104 agrees: 'It has become increasingly recognised that prophecy did not disappear in Judaism during the hellenistic and Roman periods.'

⁹⁹ I return to apocalyptic in 4.5.2. Apocalyptic is Israel's political witness to the nations in pictorial mode. See C. Fletcher-Louis *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* Tübingen: Mohr 1997, 205-11.

¹⁰⁰ I discussed this dramaturgy in 2.7.2

All that is performed in the Temple and synagogue serves as an interpretation of Israel's history with God and the world God has given Israel. The actions of the priest have a place in a series familiar to all Israel. Where everybody already knows what is going on, or are united in offering competing versions of it, each action is interpreted by the next action in the series. The priest may be telling more than one story at a time, telling one story in the mode of another, undoing and re-performing the version of a story told by rivals. All these represent a parody and deconstruction of the ideologies and claims of the nations of the gentile world. This cultic parodying involves being able expertly to manipulate the many modalities of the animal-lexicon of the bodily-world.¹⁰¹ Though it was subject to the processes of dispute and translation, it did not allow itself to be interpreted into alien terms.¹⁰² The congregation saw what they saw because they had been taught it: what they saw was not visible to non-practitioners.¹⁰³ The being of Israel was constitutively reiterated and shaped by these movements of priest and congregation to make a single paedetic effort and nation.

Law and scripture are that set of propositions that describe a particular human body, the eschatological-biological body of the God-man, Jesus Christ. This is a body captured in an instant of time and space, but includes its whole history, skills and relationships. It is therefore not the body of an individual, but of a community present as one person. It is a propositional teaching, but also a being inducted into a new way of life, a transition from a simpler to a more complex form of creaturehood. Can biblical scholarship find a way of showing how God and Israel may be in one action together, and that Israel is drawn into the action of God?

¹⁰¹ In the animal semiotics of Israel and the ancient world each dynasty and nation has an animal emblem, which may serve as a proper name for that nation or its ruling house. See the discussion of Douglas 'The Pangolin revisited: a new approach to animal symbolism' in R.G. Willis *Signifying Animals: Human Meaning in the Natural World* London: Unwin Hyman 1990.

¹⁰² Aristes in C.T.R. Haywood *The Second Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* London: Routledge 1998 gives a description of the movements of the priest in the sacrifices, though without naming them. It may be that much of the action of the priests is lost to us, or remains before us in Scripture, but which have not been recognised as priestly stage directions.

¹⁰³ Christopher Rowland *The Open Heaven A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* London: SPCK 1982, 347 argues that 'Rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 1 and Ezekiel 1 has left us with the impression that what started as an expository exercise soon turned into a vision, as parts of the chariot and the cosmos appeared in the imagination of the visionary.' For vision and its object, see 6.5.1.

3.5.3 Biblical studies on liturgy as Israel's work.

Israel has no work that is not first God's. Worship of God is Israel's work. This work of worship includes the confession that the life God intends for Israel he intends to extend through Israel to all creation.¹⁰⁴ Some Old Testament scholarship understands worship in this way.¹⁰⁵ Samuel Balentine believes that 'covenant-making and covenant-keeping recall and renew God's creational designs,' and that 'the liturgy of covenant-making can be properly understood as a liturgy of creation-keeping.'¹⁰⁶ He argues that Israel's temple represents the practice of a creation theology. 'The Torah also presents worship as the principal means through which God's creative design for the world is established, sustained and restored'. Balentine believes that the claim to participate in the labour of creation is the key to Israel's understanding of history. 'With the collapse of the history paradigm has come the move to re-conceive history in terms of creation theology...while this has led to a more balanced view, it has not produced an alternative to the history paradigm. It simply subordinates historical (human) time to 'cosmic time'.¹⁰⁷ Can the turn to performance in Old Testament studies produce the conceptuality of transformation that would allow God as agent, and as provider of the first account of his agency?¹⁰⁸ As Perdue identified the move from history to text, Balentine intends to identify the movement from text to worship understood as liturgical work. By it Israel is brought up to the status of God's co- worker.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ I argue for the liturgical context of Scripture-reading in 4.4.

¹⁰⁵ See Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* 117-228, Miller *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology* 269-336, and Bernhard W. Anderson *From Creation to New Creation: Old Testament Perspectives* Minneapolis: Fortress 1994, 208-11 for examples.

¹⁰⁶ Samuel E. Balentine *The Torah's Vision of Worship* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress 1999, 126. Balentine believes that as symbolic act (75) 'ritual has the capacity both to mirror and to transform a society's worldview and ethos, and priestly ritual must be understood with priestly creation theology.' F.H. Gorman Jr., *The Ideology of Ritual: Space Time and Status in the Priestly Theology* Sheffield 1990, 59 describes ritual as a means of 'world construction'.

¹⁰⁷ Balentine *The Torah's Vision of Worship* 22.

¹⁰⁸ Balentine seems to dichotomise worship and teaching, arguing that the historical-critical approach has given way to an emphasis on doxology. Gorman 'Ritual Studies and Biblical Studies: Assessments of the Past: Prospects of the Future' *Semeia* 67 1994, 13-36. Brueggeman *Theology of the Old Testament* 653 counters that 'it is in worship, not in contextless, cerebral activity, that Israel worked out its peculiar identity and sustained its odd life in the world. Worship life, over time, takes on an internal logic of its own in the community of practice, an internal logic not available to outsiders and about which the community does not trouble to speak very clearly or precisely.'

¹⁰⁹ Balentine *The Torah's Vision of Worship* 87 believes that 'treated separately Genesis 1 and 2 have traditionally been construed as affirmation of two ideas: God's independent (or in religious terms, transcendent) and unassisted creation of the world (Genesis 1); and humankind's depend and totally passive receipt of divine imperatives (Genesis 2)...In the vision of Genesis 1-2, however such a simple view of God's cosmic design is inadequate. Close attention to creation's liturgy makes it clear that in the world God creates, God chooses to remain open and responsive to acts of 'creaturely creativity'. God and creation are portrayed as engaged in a relationship of mutual creativity.'

3.5.4 Work complete with its outcome.

The Sabbath does not represent the cessation of work but the teaching that the outcome of God's work is already present in that working.¹¹⁰ The Sabbath is a doctrine of eschatology.¹¹¹ The Sabbath is God's work understood both as present action and as completed action together with its result, an action completed in his time, not ours, but which provides a time that is still future promise to us.

The Sabbath in Neusner's view, 'a this-worldly moment that bespeaks eternity', stands apart from the profane week of the gentiles, whom Israel has to meet and do business with.¹¹² 'Keeping the Sabbath makes us like God. Not working on the Sabbath ... is a way of imitating God'.¹¹³ So why, ask Neusner and Chilton, did Jesus not heal all week, and then, like God, observe the day that timelessly reflects the finishedness of heaven? We must reply that the work is not over and the earth not yet a finished article, ready to be appreciated in stillness. The Sabbath now takes the form of our suffering participation in his labour and therefore in the cross; this labour is constant, but it is the light yoke of priestly office. The Sabbath prevents those who, by adding day to day in unbroken series, intend to accumulate the fruit of other men's work in order to build an alternative creation of their own.¹¹⁴ All God's working is entire and complete, a single Sabbath that other days cannot interrupt.¹¹⁵ The Sabbath restricts and brings to nothing all other projects and destinies. It keeps the world open and prevents itself from knitting together into any other form.¹¹⁶ The active absenting work of God tells us that the messiah is not here, and that what is here does not amount to the messiah or to the

¹¹⁰ In 4.1-2 I argue that there must be two accounts, in one of which the outcome of God's work is present with him, and in the other of which he suffers the resistance of the world.

¹¹¹ Anderson 'Creation' *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* Nashville: Abingdon Press 1986 Volume 1, 730 states that 'Creation is fundamentally an eschatological doctrine'. Levenson *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* 109 is sceptical about the coherence of the view that the Sabbath could mean that God stops work and withdraws.

¹¹² Neusner & Chilton *Judaism in the New Testament* London: Routledge 1995, 136. New Testament scholarship has shown little interest in Sabbath, perhaps because it seldom puts the question of work in terms of the doctrine of creation, rather than of soteriology or understands the relationship of the latter to the former, and has underplayed the Sabbath as as the commission to take up the exercise of God's dominion of creation and the exercise of hospitality for the weak.

¹¹³ Neusner and Chilton *Judaism in the New Testament* 136.

¹¹⁴ LaCocque & Ricoeur *Thinking Biblically* 46 'According to Leviticus, at some point the earth can decide to take the Sabbaths that Israel did not grant her; she may refuse to produce.'

¹¹⁵ Terence E. Fretheim *Exodus* Atlanta: John Knox 1991, 230 argues that 'Sabbath-keeping is an act of creation-keeping'. Levenson 'The Jerusalem Temple', in Green, Arthur *Jewish Spirituality* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1986, 52 also believes that 'The Sabbath is a kind of democratisation of the Temple experience, and the land of Israel is an extended Temple... The Temple is the world as it ought to be.'

¹¹⁶ The seventh day is the unity of the six days, and thus 'rest' is the whole of what God has worked, not something experienced after this work, by giving it up or ceasing this effort.

totality of what is to be. What the world presently is, is not the end.¹¹⁷ The temple worship is the product of the celebration that overflows from around the throne and interrupts life below.¹¹⁸ The king is not here, but nonetheless he ensures that nothing else comes to usurp his place. To say he is not here is to say only that we are not yet made ready to receive from him our co-presence with each other. It is part of our liturgical labour to say this and lament it.¹¹⁹

3.6.1 The work of the Servant.

The Son does not act alone. The Son works with the Father to do the Father's work. The Son does the work of creation, stewardship and of bringing many sons to the Father. According to Hengel, Paul assumes that both the Father and the Son can be addressed as 'Kyrios'.¹²⁰ Both are addressed as the coming judge and credited with creation. There is a 'unique soteriological connection between Psalm 110.1 and 4, between the "sitting at the right hand of God" and the heavenly high priesthood of Christ including his soteriological *intercessio*.'¹²¹ The throne is a bench where Father and Son sit together. The high priesthood of God is God's whole mode of being for us. The high priest takes what is the Father's and gives it back to him in the form of the Son who pleases the Father. The Son is the form of the creature in full. The Father intends to extend this form to all his creatures, and through them, with all the natural history of the world of his creation. The creed correctly maintains that he sits at the right hand of the Father in opposition to that Gnostic docetism which cannot tolerate the bodily resurrection of a creature to God.¹²² The Jesus who sits at the right hand of the Father is the whole pleroma; with the entire creation we are with him there.¹²³ There is a single speech and conversation of

¹¹⁷ See 2.1.2.

¹¹⁸ See O. Hofius 'Gemeinschaft mit den Engeln im Gottesdienst der Kirche' *Zeitung für Theologie und Kirche* 89 1992; see also Preuss *Old Testament Theology* Volume 1, 256-8.

¹¹⁹ It is part of our confession to say that the messiah is not yet here. See the distinctions made in 4.1 between purposeful and pointless suffering.

¹²⁰ Martin Hengel 'Sit at My Right Hand' in *Studies in Early Christology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1995, vii. Seyoon Kim *The 'Son of Man' as the Son of God* Tübingen: Mohr 1983, 99 argues that 'With the 'Son of Man' Jesus designated himself in reference to the heavenly figure who appeared to Daniel... Jesus saw himself destined to realise the heavenly counsel revealed to Daniel.'

¹²¹ Hengel 'Sit at my Right Hand' 147. See also O. Keel *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* London: SPCK 1978, 256-68.

¹²² Hengel 'Sit at my Right Hand' 159 argues that 'the exalted Lord is no *deus otiosus*. His continual *intercessio* as the consequence of his atoning death and has its parallel in the intercession of the Spirit in the believer on earth.'

¹²³ Israel's aniconism understood that the creation could be fully itself in the meso-form of one person. The creation is the macro-version of Jesus, the person of the creation who includes and sustains all persons. He waits, looks forward, re-members and assembles the dismembered and scattered limbs of past and future. Jesus is the creation as pure object present to the Father, though not yet present as object to us.

Father and Son, and the Son – as both creature and the world of the creature – returns the Word of the Father to the Father, now not only as the Father's Word but also as the word of the world.¹²⁴ Accounts of the resistance of the world, and of loss and of fall may be told only as resistance overcome.

From the right hand of the Father the Son sends the Spirit. The Spirit replicates the Son to us and we to the Son. According to Douglas Farrow, we must begin from 'God with us', the 'descent and ascent of the God-man'.¹²⁵ This is provided by a trinitarian identification of God and Jesus, the new Adam in which all men and their world have their future. This will provide a correction for 'the tradition's tendency to undo the incarnation.'¹²⁶ Whereas the gnostics saw in the redemptive work of the *Logos* 'the separation of what was unnaturally united,' Irenaeus saw in Jesus the reunion of what was unnaturally separated. 'In teaching the coherence of all things around the incarnate Word, Irenaeus was safeguarding not only the integrity of Jesus but the integrity of every particular.'¹²⁷ Irenaeus understands the Christ-event as the climactic moment in a long history of God's approach to man. 'Only after a protracted period of preparation does the Word appear among us – not as a retort to the old covenant or its deity, but as that very deity in person...it is under their tutelage (the prophets) that we are slowly readied to receive him, for he does not come to us unannounced. When he finally does come of course a great threshold is crossed and a new age begun; under the tutelage of the incarnate one, in the communion of the Spirit, we ourselves may now advance towards God.'¹²⁸

The conversation of Father and the Son is spread by the Spirit from heaven to earth, and is picked up and rehearsed in the temple by Israel. The *sessio* of the Father and Son makes itself present in the temple as a dialectic of people and priest in the dramaturgy of apocalyptic, the condensed theological product of Israel's liturgical labour. The congregation of Israel stands in the court of the Temple, before the high priest. The congregation sees the figure of God in the high priest, while the priest sees the figure of

¹²⁴ This must be our answer to the question of the location and reality of the church. Jenson *Systematic Theology* 1 206 'Heaven is where God takes space in his creation to be present to the whole of it; he does that in the church.'

¹²⁵ Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* 249.

¹²⁶ Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* 249.

¹²⁷ Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* 55.

¹²⁸ Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* 76 argues that 'As Irenaeus sees it, our evolution has actually become our devolution the Son does not appear at the middle of history, then, but at the end; not somewhere near the top, but at the bottom.'

God in the congregation of Israel.¹²⁹ The worship takes the form of the cooperation of these parties as they participate in the conversation of God as his servant. Their conversation narrates the story of God and his servant. In the course of the narration each awards the other the role of the Lord and takes the role of servant, and God conforms this doxological playing-out to the triune conversation.¹³⁰ As they have represented it so, with the Spirit's mediation it comes to be. Congregation and priest are together bound to God in the economy of his action. All sacrifice and worship reiterates God and Man being together, bound by the many modes of the mediating action of God.

Israel is the work of God. Israel's cult is the theological description and deconstruction of the world of the gentiles, and its transformation into the finished creation of Israel's God.¹³¹ The various behavioural memes of the nations of the world are diverted from their own ultimately inconsequential trajectories into this path. By its action it captures the whole phenotype of the alternative creation of old Adam, undoing it and re-binding it into to the living and lasting creation of God. Israel deconstructs the myth of the single agent in combat with his fate. The Father and Son share a single action: the Son is able to gather up and re-play the whole behavioural history of the world transformatively and redemptively so it becomes the history of creation, the action and economy of Father and Son together. It is the argument of this chapter that Israel demonstrates that the isolated individual has no action of his own, but that Israel is drawn into the action of God. Israel has an action precisely because it is the dual action of creature exercised with his Creator. The Son is the one who acts as servant. The servant who is raised by the Father is the Son.

3.6.2 The son who would not work.

There is no work that originates in the individual. His work may be added to him if it is built with God as master workman, thus only inasmuch as he does not work alone. Otherwise he is building his house on sand, tearing down his barn to store what he will never live to enjoy, sowing for another man to reap. Nothing belongs to the individual,

¹²⁹ Does the congregation see the single figure of the Son, while the high priest sees the host of Israel, the Spirit?

¹³⁰ For such dramaturgy see 2.7

¹³¹ This dramaturgy is discussed in 4.3.2. Israel performs in the knowledge that the nations are looking on, and understand her performance to refer to themselves, and see 5.4.

and he does not gain alone from his own action.¹³² The belief that sacrifice is the violent act by which the individual wrests something out of another individual and consumes him, the myth of Marduk and Tiamat, is the teaching that the Genesis account of creation refutes. One individual cannot propel another into being or motion. Human action, and included with it, sacrifice, cannot be understood as the action of propelling the inert other into action, thereby bringing something out of nothing.

Without God, their host, mediating between them and the fruit, the first man and woman were unable to find a reply to the serpent and exercise their authority over it. Adam lost the faculty by which he could take what God gave. As a result he has only the moment of his choosing in which he surveys the world (the fruit) and God's work (the garden) and yet does not receive it, and the commission it represents, from God. He is stalled in this moment, in which he, man, weighs God against some other possibility of man's own invention. The Adam of the Western *ordo salutis* is the individual whose choice is to continue to re-choose such that he can never actually choose, be satisfied and finish that act and be ready for another.

The Western tradition of which Kant is representative teaches that everything is subsequent to and constituted by the fall of Adam.¹³³ Yet the Adam who fell thereby ceased to be the first and constitutive Adam. It is the second Adam who becomes the source and beginning of Adam's race.¹³⁴ The supercession debate has its origin within a protology, an assumption that what is, is already autonomous and settled. But we may not measure God's work by how far he succeeds in returning the situation to one that preceded this fall. This would problematise the relationship of our action and his by making it a question of who initiates and permits the action of whom, God or Man. But the work of God is its own measure; he gives it its autonomy, and pronounces when it has that autonomy and ensures that all that shall be does not detract from or threaten but fits and renders perfect all that has been made.

Adam understood his encounter with God as a meeting with an equal with whom he could agree on separate fields of operation, to cooperate or conduct turf-wars. Adam did not recognise that his own body and resources were the possession and work of the

¹³² That the individual has no work, or that all agency is dual and plural, I argue in Chapter 2 and against what I shall call an enlightenment view in 5.2.

¹³³ Kant 'Speculative beginning of human history' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* ed. T. Humphrey Indianapolis: Hackett 1983, 51. See also Christof Gestrinch *The Return of Splendour: The Christian Doctrine of Sin and Forgiveness* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997, 84-117.

¹³⁴ According to James D.G. Dunn '1 Corinthians 15.45' in Barnabas Lindars, & Stephen S. Smalley *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament* London: Cambridge University Press 1973, 140 'Jesus became Last Adam

God who addressed him. The sum of things that Adam does do not belong to him, and the things of his world do not recognise Adam or come willingly to him. Had Adam acted as the priest of creation, acting within the freedom of the end rather than the constraint of his origin, he would have overcome the mortality inherent in these beginnings and ends, and so freed all creation for the eschatological and free life of the creature of God.¹³⁵ But, not having learned and grown into his freedom, Adam did not have the maturity to be the priest of creation, and did not succeed in liberating creation from its mortality. It is the end that is determinative, not the beginning. The end re-determines the beginning; the beginning is reckoned from him from whom all beginnings and ends take their orientation. By taking the world into his hands and creatively integrating it and referring it to God, the new Adam liberates creation from the failed priesthood of Adam the individual, re-fathers Adam, and allows the future to be determined by the Adam who is Man-with-God, the creature who is with his Creator. In Chapter 5 I will argue that the story of secularisation and evolution of the economy of the modern West derive from this story of the man who does not understand himself as creature of God under the command of God. In Chapter 6 I will argue that this Son has already been overcome by the obedient Son who does the Father's work.

3.7 Sacrifice and Law.

The new being and action sent as the Spirit by the Father and the Son is supplied to Israel only as fast as Israel receive it, learn it and make it part of her own character. God gives Israel the law as the set of skills by which to live on the estate and in the household of God.

3.7.1 Genesis 22

The Decalogue exemplifies the character of God and announces the freedom of the people who are his.¹³⁶ Each article amplifies the first command to worship the one God. The sixth, the command not to murder, describes one aspect of the new life set out by the first command. Israel is the people no longer subject to the imperative of murder. Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac – the *Aqedah* – is not only the enactment of the sixth

at his resurrection.' As the first Adam came into existence at creation, so the last Adam (as such) came into existence at resurrection, so the resurrection marks the beginning of the humanity of the second Adam. '

¹³⁵ the argument of Zizioulas 'Preserving God's Creation' *King's Theological Review* 13 1990, III, 4.

¹³⁶ This is argued by S. Hauerwas 'The Truth about God: The Decalogue as Condition for Truthful Speech' in *Sanctify Them in the Truth* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1998, and see Brevard S. Childs *Exodus A Commentary* London: SCM 1974, 393-427.

commandment but the inauguration of the new economy of freedom it opens.¹³⁷ I find the majority approach here unsatisfactory, and will be asking whether it is the proper reading of Genesis 22. I will be setting out a new version, which if it is correct, must also be an old one. It tells the *Aqedah* as the whole story of Israel as the story of the Son who goes to do his Father's work.

The climax of the *Aqedah* has been understood to be the moment when Abraham raises his knife. But the tension of this moment in the story is not however because Abraham knows he is going to do a horrible thing. Abraham is an Aramean, for whom child sacrifice is a customary, not an awful, thing.¹³⁸ The tension is because we do not know how God's promise is going to win out over this ancestral practice. In this event this act is for the first time portrayed under the new concept of murder, and understood to be horrible. It is understood in this way precisely by that holy people who are to spring from Abraham as a result.¹³⁹ So the command 'Take your only Son and sacrifice him as a burnt-offering', is not the story, and the raising of the knife not its climax. They are the scene-setting. It is the divine command that follows that constitutes the story.

Abraham's hand is halted by a word from God. The whole story is located in the climax and punch-line of the command, 'Do not lay a hand on the boy'.¹⁴⁰ Does God command Abraham to kill his Son, or does he forbid killing, with the result that he gets many sons who are holy? Which way to read this story? We have to employ the whole of the scriptures to determine that this is a teaching about the whole work of God with man. It embraces generations and millennia, but flattens out the eschatology into a palimpsest, as though a three-frame cartoon, illustrating past, present and future, were redrawn superimposed in a single frame. We have to decide whether this is a story about an origin, and thus about how we got to be the way we are, or whether it illustrates timeless truths, or whether it teaches that we are to receive a future that is different from our past.

¹³⁷ The majority approach is represented by James L. Crenshaw *A Whirlpool of Torment: Israelite traditions of God as oppressive presence* Philadelphia: Fortress 1984; Philip R. Davies & Bruce Chilton 'The Aqedah: A revised tradition history' *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40 514-46 1978; Raymond E. Brown *The Death of the Messiah From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* Anchor Bible New York: Doubleday 1994 Volume 2, 1435-44. R.W.L. Moberly *The Bible, Theology and Faith: A Study of Abraham and Jesus* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000 seems to be moving in a direction similar to my own.

¹³⁸ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 2, 1588, and see Levenson and Strenski below.

¹³⁹ Attributing horror to Abraham's state of mind is a reading back, one of those anachronisms resorted to for heuristic reasons.

¹⁴⁰ Genesis 22.12 *Do not lay a hand on the boy.. Now I know that you fear God because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.*

As Aramean, Abraham believes the death of a son releases a stream of sons and prosperity, an economic conceptuality that understands that to get something out you have to put something in.¹⁴¹ The original commandment of self-restraint reflects mankind's subjection to nature and necessity. But the *Aqedah* commandment, Do not murder, establishes that Israel is not subject to this economic logic that determines the rest of the earth. The identification of the death of the firstborn as murder frees Israel from the forces and compulsions of nature. God's staying the knife is the first lesson in the establishment of a new polity, and the meaning of this knife-staying lesson and the accomplishment it represents is only slowly subsequently realised. It requires many generations of life with God for Israel to begin to learn the character of God summarised in the Sinai Decalogue of freedoms.

I am arguing against a tradition which interprets Genesis 22 as a story either about the fall as the origin of man's freedom, or a timeless truth about the seizing of freedom through breaking through limits, 'the suspension of the ethical'. Both interpretations understand that Abraham was selected because he was obedient, because in some way he chose himself. This story has been read as the founding moment of man's antinomianism, of God's invitation to break the law of God and leave it behind. It would encourage us to believe that choosing yourself is the real form of choosing. Such readings, primarily that of *Fear and Trembling*, have ignored the Decalogue and the rest of the bible, which is reason enough to make us suspicious.¹⁴² Jon Levenson provides a substantial recent treatment of the *Aqedah* in this tradition. He finds that Reformed discussions of Abraham's faith, such as von Rad's, ignore the contextual verses around

¹⁴¹ According to Albertz *A History of Israelite Religion* 102-3 If you want sons and offspring for your flocks you have to prepare a place for them in the body of a son given as a firstfruits offering. For a social anthropological statement of this sacrificial logic see W. Burkert *Homo Necans The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* Berkeley: University of California Press 1983, 39. In Chapter 6 I argue that closed (zero-sum) and open economies should not be set in a strong contrast but set in a teleological logic that allows that the God of Israel commandeers and transforms the conflict of histories into salvation history.

¹⁴² Kierkegaard *Fear and Trembling* ed W. Lowrie Princeton: Princeton University Press 1941. Before Kierkegaard's reading, the tension was between divine command and paternal affection, not not between divine and moral law. Derrida *Given Time* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1992 follows *Fear and Trembling* in reading the *Aqedah* as a Jewish potlatch which, by giving everything for nothing, intended to wreck the rationality of bourgeois faith in deferred gratification. John D. Caputo *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion* Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1997, 196 believes that Abraham all the time he has, but has no idea if this will buy the future promised. 162 'When Abraham raised the dagger and resolved to plunge ahead, to give (death) without a return, without knowing where this mad leap would land him in the next moment, then, in that very moment when the angel stayed his dagger from Isaac's breast, Abraham severed the circle of time and left it gaping open.' Milbank 'The Sublime in Kierkegaard' *Heythrop Journal* 37 1996, also believes that this is a reckless gift 143 'This is a total sacrifice of self and others'. 144 'Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac is an anti-sacrifice because it is a completely pointless sacrifice: *not* the ancient sacrifice performed within the city to ensure its survival.'

Genesis 15.6, the bible as a whole and rabbinic commentary.¹⁴³ Levenson argues that child sacrifice played a continuing part in the religion of Israel.¹⁴⁴ They were the continuation of the sacrifices to Baal, the god who offers up his only begotten or beloved son to immolation.¹⁴⁵ 'The impulse to sacrifice the first-born remained potent long after the literal practice had become odious and fallen into desuetude', becoming transformed into 'a sublime paradigm of the religious life.'¹⁴⁶ The sacrifice of the first-born son is part of a larger biblical theology of the first-born and his relationship to his father, which is 'a matter of more significance to the relationship of the theologies of the people Israel and the Church than has heretofore been recognised.'¹⁴⁷ If Abraham had not obeyed the command to sacrifice Israel he would, according to Levenson, have elected Isaac as his own son over Isaac the Beloved Son and a place in the 'larger providential drama'. The *Aqedah* 'tests whether Abraham is prepared to surrender his son to God who gave him. To say with Kierkegaard and von Rad, that he is prepared to do so because through faith he expects to receive Isaac anew (as indeed happens) is to minimise the frightfulness of what Abraham is commanded to do.'¹⁴⁸ Levenson, in line with Jewish medieval commentary, sees the sacrifice as a test of Isaac more than of Abraham, and sees father and son as undivided in their obedience to God. Ivan Strenski asks Levenson whether we can 'move so easily from deploring the "obviously" barbaric to the plainly "sublime".'¹⁴⁹

But all these ever more extravagant portrayals of Abraham as individual and originator of subjectivity represent a failure of eschatology and thus a false start. Israel's sacrifices should be seen not as killing, and thus not as killing sons, but as commentary on the practices of the world - which feature killing sons.¹⁵⁰ Israel's theology is the refusal

¹⁴³ Levenson 'Why Jews are not Interested in Biblical Theology' 137.

¹⁴⁴ See J. D. Levenson *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity*. On human sacrifice De Vaux R. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* London: Darton, Longman & Todd 1961, 441-6.

¹⁴⁵ Levenson *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* 34.

¹⁴⁶ Levenson *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* 52, x.

¹⁴⁷ Levenson *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* 34.

¹⁴⁸ Levenson *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* 126.

¹⁴⁹ Strenski 'Between Theories and Speciality: Sacrifice in the 90's' *Religious Studies Review* 22 1996, 10 asks 'What kind of religion or society could place child sacrifice anywhere, much less apparently at the centre of their ceremonial life? Strenski *Durkheim and the Jews of France* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1997, 103 points out that 'Frazer wrote that ancient Hebrew human sacrifice and the death of Jesus were part of a 'surviving' Jewish culture trait of bloody sacrificial victimisation.'

¹⁵⁰ To understand Israelite sacrifice as killing is to ignore the dramatic and didactic character of this event and its liturgical remembering in temple sacrifice. Israel intends to represent this as the horrible act of the gentiles who can know no better. It is a dumb-show of son-killing that Israel is performing in the knowledge that the son-killer nations are watching and know that they are meant. Only the non-expert (modern) onlooker who is ignorant of this complex mimetic relationship of Israel with her audience could conclude that this is an act of son-killing, rather than of halting the son-killers. By ignoring the audience of the surrounding gentile nations, modern hermeneutics, refusing to be the expert audience (2.7) reads the *Aqedah* and Israel's sacrifice generally as precisely the reverse of what Israel intends.

and refutation of accounts of violence or necessity as origins of economic rationality. The Aramean practices of Abraham pre-date the election of Abraham and the commencement of the training and character formation of Israel. Israel's sacrificial practice does not originate in the sacrifice of first-born. The *Aqedah* represents the election from the gentiles of a new holy God-dedicated line. Abraham is a gentile plucked from the gentiles. At the origin of Israel's coming into being is all the practices of the gentiles from which Israel has been elected and removed. She is elected and re-created against the background of this chaos and violence. These are not the basis of her election, however, and she refuses them as violence and chaos only as she is trained to identify them as such. That all the behaviour of the world is chaotic and violent, is not obvious to gentiles, but has to be learned by the elect community. Violence is what the gentiles amount to, and as such it is the background against which, and even on which, Israel's new character is written and formed.

Abraham is not tested to see what he is as individual, to see whether there is enough faith-substance in him to make him worth God's while. Testing and judgement belong only with the process of the formation of the elect community.¹⁵¹ It is the fiction of individualism that the individual contains the whole world in microcosm, a sufficient source of world to himself - but that it is a fiction is precisely what Israel is teaching us. It is only a story about Abraham inasmuch as it is about the generations who, by obediently referring to him as father, make him their father. He tests positive for fatherhood because of their obedience, not because of any property of Abraham the individual. The redemption of Isaac from Abraham's knife is not a second event subsequent to Abraham's call but a further lesson in Abraham's election, his being recruited to the task of making many holy generations. It is the teaching in summary and the story in diagram form. The situation is that mankind is inseparable from the habit of killing; the story is that one instance of mankind is prevented from killing, and the consequence is that this character is the father of many children who are to become strangers to the earlier ways of mankind. Out of the Do no Murder command, comes Isaac, the guarantee of Abraham's line.

¹⁵¹ Moberly *The Bible, Theology and Faith* 99 interprets 'tests' as 'refines', not 'tempts'. If refining relates to training and becoming, it allows for the paideutic version of sacrifice I am arguing for and the necessary expressivist rather than causal logic that it requires. Childs *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* 327 also opts for a sense for 'tests' that looks forward to God's ongoing action.

3.7.2 The Fall

If we understand the story to be that God tests Abraham by telling him to sacrifice his Son, it becomes merely a repetition of Adam's fall. Abraham's significance would then be as the individual constituted by his own decision, by himself in absence of relationship. Adam would then succeed in doing something precisely inasmuch as he does it himself, without God. This is the Kantian *ordo salutis*, on the basis of which Adam's fall and being without God would be the beginning of the real history of man, understood as man-without-God.¹⁵² Instead we should follow Irenaeus in speaking of the fall only in terms of its correction and recapitulation by the second Adam, that is in terms that show that the fall did not succeed in being a fall.¹⁵³ The fall is not an action which man achieves by himself. The Creator was not too feeble to hold on, and his creature did not slip from his grasp.¹⁵⁴ The fall was not a free fall through empty space, but was a falling and being caught and placed in a particular God-determined time and place, a soft place within which, though we are sin-damaged, sin is effectively limited by death and cannot make an end of us. Sin and death are theological, not publicly given, concepts. Death is not its own master, but is confined to this world-container, placed from the beginning by God, for God's purposes. So within this death-delimited place of our falling and landing is the world which, because it is the world of God's working, has enough 'give' and flexibility in it to withstand the whole excess and deficiency that our sin represents.

¹⁵² In Kant's exegesis of the fall as the 'Speculative beginning of human history' *Perpetual Peace* 51 Man 'discovered in himself an ability to choose his own way of life and thus not to be bound like other animals to just one.' The fall was man's breakthrough into self-production 53 'Whether man has gained or lost as a result of this change can no longer be asked, at least if one looks to the vocation of his species, which consists in nothing other than *progress* towards perfection'. Similarly G.W. F. Hegel *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Volume 3 *The Consummate Religion* edited by Peter C. Hodgson, Berkeley: University of California Press 1985, 104-8 (41-5). According to C. Gestrinch *The Return of Splendour in the World* 86 'Hegel believed he could take from this verse (Genesis 3.22 *The man has become one of us, knowing good and evil*) the idea that Adam and Eve's sinful falling away from the image of God given to them when they were created was not only a source of evil in the world but at the same time the source of a very positive opportunity for the development of humanity since now the knowledge of the good also became possible.' But Gestrinch points out that (88) 'Adam has not moved into a position directly under the position of God *by a fall into sin*. On the contrary, Adam's authority to name all living beings and gain power over them was decisively reduced by the fall.' See the remarks of Pannenberg *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1985, 47-60, and Barth *Church Dogmatics* 4,1, 382.

¹⁵³ According to Irenaeus *Adversus Haereses* 3.21.10 'So also by the obedience of one man, righteousness having been reintroduced, shall cause life to fructify in those persons who in times past were dead...so did he who is the Word, recapitulating Adam in himself, rightly receive a birth, enabling him to gather up Adam (into himself) from Mary.' *Adversus Haereses* 3.22.3 'Luke points out that the pedigree which traces the generation of our Lord back to Adam contains seventy-two generations connecting the end with the beginning, and implying that it is he who has summed up in himself all nations dispersed from Adam downwards.'

¹⁵⁴ The fall has been constitutive in a certain Western understanding of the relationship of God's space and time and man's that has led to the belief that man is able to defend his own space against God.

Rather than attribute the fall to any necessity or nature as the Western *ordo salutis* seems to do, I want to rely on a more paediatric and Irenaean account. The Fall was a wandering and a failure to maintain a direction or discover any orientation. Adam's being is that of being in a house without a host, a society without other members: it is an autism.¹⁵⁵ By never getting around to the task and work of co-creation with God together, he commenced by default another work that amounted to dismantling God's creation to make something much poorer with it, never reckoning whether he had the wherewithal to complete a city of his own. By following Adam in failing to recognise the owner of this creation and its own implicit order, we also fail to take advantage of the place intended by God for our flourishing, and succeed only in running it down. In the wilderness Jesus declined to continue this refusal or be party to this estrangement. He turns away from Adam's refusal and Satan's account of alternative creations, and takes up God's work again. Jesus does not come to a business gone into receivership but to his own vineyard and house; he re-assumes the office of householder, and the estate recognises the voice of its master. He puts his hand to the plough and goes to prepare the place for us. So to apply this more Irenaean version of Adam to Abraham, we cannot understand Abraham as individual, but as Israel, the obedient servant and witness of God.¹⁵⁶

3.7.3 Murder: Israel's estimate of gentile being.

God's giving of the concept of murder is one act with his election of the people of Israel. The concept of murder is not one apparent to all the world, a commandment that the gentiles could keep if they wished. The commandment is precisely to be not-gentile, to have nothing to do with those forms of life that Israel lumps together under the term gentile.¹⁵⁷ The command 'Do no murder' is the election of Israel in imperative mood. God's word is the unity of description and imperative, of speech and its being heard-and-

¹⁵⁵ Irenaeus understood Adam as immature. *Adversus Haereses* 3.22. Adam and Eve 'having been created a short time previously had no understanding of the procreation of children; for it was necessary that they should first come to adult age.'

¹⁵⁶ Wyschogrod is mistaken in understanding either Jesus or God as individual, unaccompanied by his Word and the hearer of that Word. With the personhood he has from the Father by the Holy Spirit, Jesus persons Abraham too.

¹⁵⁷ E. Feldman *Biblical and post-Biblical Defilement and Mourning: Law as Theology* New York: Yeshiva University 1977 believes that Israel is not so much concerned with death as physical phenomenon as in demythologising death, by demonstrably rejecting those routines and observances that surround death in other societies. Von Rad *Old Testament Theology* London: SCM 1975 Volume 2, 350 agrees: 'What is astonishing is the way in which this mysterious world (of death) is entirely divested of its sacred character.'

acted on. Within this concept of murder come all species of gentile being, all summed as 'death'. The command returns to the idolaters what they have offered, a case of paying them back in their own coin. Worship of some other god is death, and putting to death what is death belongs to the act of confession of God as the only Lord.¹⁵⁸

If Moriah, the mountain of the Jerusalem temple is the key, the sacrifice of Isaac refers us to the whole range of the sacrifices taught in Leviticus and Deuteronomy and practised in Jerusalem.¹⁵⁹ This worship is the practice of the husbandry of the creation into which Israel has been set.¹⁶⁰ It is a creation theology, which prepares and trains Israel up to become that entirely unforeseen creature, the man who is with God. By unlearning the patterns and orientation-less deviations which represent Adam's endless failure to make a start on the job, and starting on an apprenticeship as priest of creation, the old creature becomes the new creature. What goes on in the Jerusalem temple is the training by which this people will come to realise that killing, which characterises all other nations, is a way no longer open to them. No blood whatsoever may touch the ground of the holy land of Israel. No intrinsic significance is given to blood, but all the practices of the gentiles involving blood for the ancestors are demonstrably reversed in the Temple – the blood is simply poured away down the drain around the altar.¹⁶¹ It is, as Milgrom shows, not a matter of safely disposing of a dangerous substance, but of comprehensively disarming and de-paganising death, sin, blood and purity. It is part of the heuristic intent of the liturgical practices that teach the status of Israel and character of her God.¹⁶² Comprehension and appropriation of them is not secondary to the rituals of atonement themselves, for the rituals are responsible for the formation of Israel's new mind.

According to Jacob Milgrom, all Israel's sacrifice is about demonstrating publicly – and thus at the altar – that the animal killed falls within the definition of meat that may be eaten by Israel. Each killing must be shown to be the permitted killing of the animals within the covenant and thus to be not a case of murder. To make this is a permissible sacrifice, the Israelite is required to return the blood, otherwise his own blood will be

¹⁵⁸ according to Moberly 'Towards a Definition of the Shema' in Seitz & Greene-McCreight *Theological Exegesis* 135 'Deuteronomy 7 presents *herem* as a metaphor for religious fidelity...The rationale for *herem* is election and holiness, the essential counterpart to the confession that Yahweh is One and Israel is to love him unreservedly.' *Herem*, 'putting to the ban', means destroying everything and everyone associated with pagan cult, and tolerating no mixture or intermarriage.

¹⁵⁹ See Moberly *The Bible, Theology and Faith* 108-18.

¹⁶⁰ See Perdue *Collapse of History* 115-40.

¹⁶¹ See Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1 704-6, 49. The gentiles are told just to pour the blood out, but Israel must do this on the altar (Leviticus 17.11). See Maimonides on Israel's sacrifice as reversal of pagan practices in 5.4.

forfeit. Only the permitted animals may be killed, and that only when the blood of a proportion of them is publicly disempowered at the temple.¹⁶³ Man's violent nature cannot change, but it need not pollute the earth if, according to Leviticus 11, he obeys one law, to abstain from blood: human blood must not be shed and animal blood must not be eaten. The life is God's and must be returned to God. Israel enjoys the repeated use-value of the permitted animals by not consuming the whole life (blood) of creature. Since this blood prohibition is not to be found in Israel's neighbours it 'must be adjudged as the product of a rational, deliberate opposition to the prevailing practice of its environment.'¹⁶⁴

The liturgical labour of the temple represents the becoming-holy of the nation. The temple is the process of the establishment of the new creation in which Israel is Adam, finally set to work. Jesus is the Israel, who having undergone baptism, turns away from the possibilities of alternative regimes and creations of the gentiles to take up the Father's work.

3.7.4 The office and action of sacrifice.

Man is given a new action. Man is to be drawn into the co-work of creation, and that action we can summarise as 'sacrifice'. This is the means by which he is drawn into this new action.¹⁶⁵ Leviticus instructs that '*he is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.*'¹⁶⁶ 'In the Old Testament cult the consecration takes place by placing the hand on the head of the sacrificial animal, extending to it the personhood of the sacrificer, to identify the sacrificial animal and the offerer of the sacrifice.'¹⁶⁷ The high point of the sacrifice is the laying of hands on the

¹⁶² See Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 44-5.

¹⁶³ Milgrom, Douglas and Neusner leave open the question of whether this fear of the signs of murder is purely to avoid suspicion of human murder, or because the ecological ruling says that killing an animal really is equal to murder of a man (Douglas' view), or because all animals represent either Israel inside the covenant or the gentiles outside it.

¹⁶⁴ See Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 706. In the same way, semen is holy because it is the life-substance of Israel, and has a periodicity longer than the individual Israelite who produces it.

¹⁶⁵ See Dalferth *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte* 271-83, Preuss *Old Testament Theology* Volume 2, 238-44 and Pannenberg *Systematic Theology* Volume 2, 421-28 on christological employment of Old Testament concepts of sacrifice.

¹⁶⁶ Leviticus 1.4.

¹⁶⁷ According to Dalferth 'Mythos, Ritual, Dogmatik: Strukturen der religiösen Text-Welt' *Evangelische Theologie* 47, 1987, 278 There are 'three stages to the action of the Old Testament sin-offering: the act of consecration by which an animal became the symbol of the Lord of the sacrifice, the act of killing the animal which is significant only as the means of obtaining blood, and the act of symbolic incorporation of the man into salvific communion with God.' It creates a transfer or extension of agency and an identification of the offerer and his offering ('..es zur 'Subjektübertragung', zur Identifizierung von Opferherr und Opfertier kommt.')

sacrificial animal. In laying his hands on this creature he is appointed its steward. He is given the office of the steward and priest of God who is mandated to exercise the authority of Israel's God over his creation.¹⁶⁸ With this office the sacrificer received a new mode of personhood and new existence. But it is not only a single event but part of the process of training and instructing him in this task. By this hand gesture the Israelite takes up his task, and through the sacrificial animal he will have access into the court and presence of the Lord.¹⁶⁹ Jesus's death is the meeting in one place of God and man. This meeting should be understood as the building and consecration of a temple, a house where the two of them may be together.¹⁷⁰

In Israel's economy sacrifice refers to and instructs the sacrificer in the return of being. This is, Janowski argues, 'a category of social interaction that refers to our acting-to-and-for-one another in a complex economy.'¹⁷¹ Being is what is supplied, and it is supplied as a particular opportunity of action. Old action gives way to and makes place for new action, and new action does not remove old action but secures it and supplies what is missing from it. Paying back means responding to the demand to be offered some token of relationship. The demand we all make of the other is that they give us something of themselves. This should be an account of themselves in which we feature – that they lay out for us some place which we share with them. The law of return of like for like (*talion*) is not only about criminal law and vengeance. It is also the basis of civil law, compensation and the provision of a basis for negotiation to start the process of making good. The satisfaction theory should be understood not in terms of punishment but of the giving and receiving of being from one another. Wrath and punishment refer to that moment when this process has stalled, and there is a collapse in Israel's economy of being until God re-starts the process of giving and receiving with a new injection of giving. 'Anselm and the Bible agree that satisfaction is not opposed to the idea of forgiveness but is its presupposition, and reconciliation takes place at the initiative of the guilty.'¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ See Zizioulas 'Preserving God's Creation' Third lecture, 6, discussed in 1.2.3; and Anderson *From Creation to New Creation* 111-31 'Human dominion over nature'.

¹⁶⁹ See Janowski *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen* Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn 2000, 199-221 for discussion of the laying on of hands. The animal's persona and therefore death is extended to include the Israelite who offers him in the Temple.

¹⁷⁰ Kraus *Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe* argues that the death of Jesus is the consecration of the temple in which man will be with God.

¹⁷¹ Janowski 'Der Tat kehrt zum Täter zurück' in *Die Rettende Gerechtigkeit* Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn 1999. See also C. Gestrich 'God takes our Place: A Religious-Philosophical Approach to the Concept of Stellvertretung' *Modern Theology* 17.3 2001.

¹⁷² C.E. Gunton review of Steindl *Genugtuung: Biblisches Versöhnungsdenken - eine Quelle für Anselms Satisfaktionstheorie?* *Journal of Theological Studies* 43, 1992, 285.

The animal represents the whole ecosystem, medium and world which God provides for his people. Because animals represent places in an ecosystem, they function as a semiotic technology, the basis and middle term of all communicative action. Animals bear political meanings. Leviticus lists the animals that may enter the Temple and be sacrificed to represent the elect nation, while animals which are not acceptable represent the gentiles outside the covenant.¹⁷³ The animal is the creature and instrument of the Lord of animals-and-the-nations. Grasping the animal in the way instructed in Leviticus is taking and accepting the appointment as officer or lord over the gentile and animal world. To take this animal is to take its Lord and receive his word and command. God has his hand on the animal and when by this consecration man's hand is placed on the animal too, the animal includes the agency of the two of them. The man enters the place of the Lord sponsored and accompanied by the animal, and as the animal is the servant and representative of the Lord, we can say that the Lord escorts the man into the place of the Lord. Man and animal do not swap places, but the agency of the animal is extended to include the man. Like a court usher the sacrificial animal accompanies the man through the courts of the king to the throne room where the king sits. In this place he will receive from his king his own place. The animal is the whole world and medium God gives man and man obediently receives. It is a lease and commission. It is given only as long as it is obediently received and returned and received again.

Though there are two parties to every sacrifice, it is not the case that one is sacrificed to the other. Rather the one is inducting the other into creaturehood, an event and process of *paideia*. This is an event, in which one party mandates the other, and a process, in which one is trained by another into the skills by which he can receive and exercise this mandate. The two parties comprise a teacher and a learner, a man sacrificing, and his Lord supervising his learning and correct performance of sacrifice, the exercise of the priestly office. The sacrifice is not for the benefit of the lord, but is part of the practice of the husbandry into which the Lord inducts his servant. Every process of teaching and learning is accompanied by a process of testing and inspection. By the performance of sacrifice and bringing some of the results of her husbandry to the temple for inspection, Israel's progress in appropriating the land and learning the holy practices of husbandry of her God are tested. I said in Chapter 3 that the identification and isolation of sin is a component of this process of progress-checking which is itself a part of learning.

¹⁷³ See Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999, 225, discussed in 4.3.3.

Leviticus tells us that God puts his hand on the world in the form of the animal, and keeps his hand on it to ward off other gods and claimants. The instruction of Leviticus 1.4 '*He shall put his hand on the sacrifice and it will be an atonement for him*', is a summary statement of the relationship of God to his world which man under God is to participate in. This description of this gesture represents Israel's deconstruction of the teeming hand-movements and obeisances of the pagans. It is the relationship expressed in the Aqedah, that Abraham obediently played the part God gave him to play, God's own office. He put his hand on Isaac, the future of Israel, gaining for man a place at the head of creation, a place he is to keep his hand on. We can therefore say that at one point Israel has only and precisely one member. God is this member. God distinguishes himself from us. The Son is at the right hand of the Father, one God, and God with man his work. Other than God, no member of Israel is capable of sustaining their own identity or supplying identity to others. Perhaps we can also say that Israel never expected anything else than that God be her vindication. The ancestor through whom all Israel must march is not Abraham, but Jesus. Only as a result of passing through Jesus does Abraham's line continue and his fatherhood achieve duration. We may therefore say that the product of the eucharistic industry and economy of Israel is no divisible commodity, but creatures who have the character and image of the God of Israel. They are members of his staff and household, and are therefore persons, free and able to open new action and freedom to each other. Next I must say something about the medium employed by this account.

Chapter 4

The medium of God's work

We must now ask about the medium and economy in which God distinguishes himself from us and reconciles us to himself. God is the medium of his work. This theology requires a pneumatology that will reflect the many forms of this work of God.

4.1 Accounting for cost.

The Lord is the Spirit. A spirit is fine enough to enter anywhere but is not divisible, and therefore may not itself be divided or penetrated.¹ The Spirit is one, and makes his work one with him. The Son is employed in the work of the Father. Their unity, discussed in 2.1 and 3.1, cannot be divided, analysed or known where the Spirit does not make the Son known. The Spirit can penetrate our economy, but nothing in our economy can divide the Son from the Spirit. The Spirit is therefore able to act as the medium by which we are brought out of many economies into the single economy of their action. The medium of God's action is first God himself. Subsidiarily it is also those other economies God brings to an end, and to a new beginning, in the economy of his creation.

Chapter 2 argued for the importance of a medium by which to articulate performance, and by which to recognise failure in order to improve that performance. Sin is the conceptuality by which an account of the holy character of Israel's God may be given and that holiness brought into being in his people. The sins of Israel do not succeed in coming between Israel and God. The enmity of Israel never prevents God's coming to this people; the earth can cope with and bear Israel's sins. This much must be said, though it is not yet a sufficient statement. In the first place sin is childishness. God does not do anything with Israel's sin, but puts up with it as a parent puts up with the false pronunciation of a child which disappears in the eventual speech of the adult person. This sin has no cost. Since the gentiles are without any parent or instructor to bring them up, they cannot develop to leave sin behind. But where mixing with the gentiles means that Israel continues to pick up their behaviour and be re-infected by it,

¹ I shall argue in 5.6 that a pneumatology is a monist, not dualist, account. It does not distinguish two natures, divine and human.

sin is also serious and in need of atonement. The diaspora is threatened by proximity with the gentiles. With the end of Israel-Judah as autonomous kingdom, the gentiles, and thus the diaspora existence, come to the land of Israel itself. The pollution of the land caused by the mixture and mayhem of uncontrolled murderous gentile appetites really does threaten the whole world. Where else will salvation for the gentiles come from if not from the holy people?

In her infancy, God overlooks Israel's sin and counts it for nothing. We will see Milgrom and others offer such an account below. But this is not yet an adequate account. God is also angry at sin. He condemns it, and destroys it.² Israel is the judgement of God against the gentiles. Gentiles kill and eat, fail to hold together, die and are reclaimed by the earth. Death is built in to them and is the working-out of what they are and do.³ Fallen creation goes beyond its boundaries yet fails to grow into its proper limits. The boundaries given to enable it to progress to fullness of life now serve only to keep it from progressing from one stage to another. It is stalled in an earlier form of life. Mortality is necessary at every stage so the organism can move through and out of that stage, but considered apart from the causality of the end, the whole adds up only to mortality and futility. The doctrine of sin defines chasing, rutting, tearing and killing as typical of the species man. This species will never become anything that it is not already. It is only the arrival of the Law to one people, the elect community of Israel, that makes the behaviour of man murder. We must say this as a corrective to the Kantian anthropology that has guilt and sin as almost intrinsic to our dignity. That man is given over to death is not a piece of natural theology.⁴ It is only Israel that terms all they do as sin, and all they are as death. Death is what the gentiles do and what they amount to. It is Israel's name for the gentile world.⁵

² See J.D.G. Dunn *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1998, 62-70 for an account of judgment of sin, 102-14; H.D. Preuss *Old Testament Theology* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1995 Volume 1 128-37 on Yahweh as warrior and as war; W. Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress 1997 373-84 where God's judgement seems to become God's violence, negativity and irrationality.

³ See Zizioulas *Being as Communion Studies in Personhood and the Church* London: Darton, Longman & Todd 1985, 51-53.

⁴ S. Hauerwas *Sanctify Them in the Truth* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1998, 66 asks '[w]hy is talk of Christ considered 'fideistic' but not talk (ie natural theology) of sin?'

⁵ Mary Douglas *In the Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1993, 24 argues that '[t]he nature of the living God is in opposition to dead bodies. Total incompatibility holds between God's presence and bodily corruption. God is living, life is his. Other gods belong to death, contagion and decay.' Similarly Jon D. Levenson *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1988, 29 explains that 'The Adversary overcome in Isaiah 25:6-9 is not Leviathan under whatever name, but 'Death'. It is best to see in this term the name of a deity, because the same word (*mt*) denotes in Ugaritic the name of one of Baal's foes, *Mot*, the deadly son of El, who succeeds in swallowing Baal.' Yahweh swallows Death rather than the reverse. Against Levenson we must say that the opponents of Yahweh are opposed to him only in being his rivals

But more than this, the gentiles are also the judgement of God against Israel. Sin is most visible in Israel for Israel is a worse sinner than the Gentiles, and Gentiles will be employed as Israel's punishment. Yet even in disobedience, Israel still bears witness to the action of God.⁶ So on the one hand the gentiles are innocents, and what they do is not yet even sin. On the other, they are the dogs, outside any law, and therefore are sin. Their sin threatens even the holy people.

Jesus is handed over to the world. Although Jesus is the circumcision, baptism and anointing, he is circumcised, baptised and anointed.⁷ Although he is the resurrection, the one who may never die, he suffers and dies. He suffers the world, and is *worlded*. He calls out from the world what is most intrinsic to it – death – and calls it together at the single point of the cross. When Jesus calls, death comes out of the world. The Spirit makes the Son indivisible and so impregnable: he can divide the world, but it cannot break him. He is able to break open the world and separate death from it.⁸ The indivisible Spirit drives division out. The world is *Jesused*. Death has no claim on him, so finds nothing in him by which it can gain purchase. Death is *deathed*. God has allowed the tares to grow in the field, and though they, like all the kings of the earth, grow very confident, their destruction is assured, for he has all this time prepared a place for them, a no-place. In entering that container God himself is not contained, but breaks open what only he had held shut.

As Israel suffers the gentile onslaughts she is half-persuaded that she has to compete with the gentiles as an equal rather than as their lord. She has to fight them as though she were one of them, rather than bear them as a parent does a child. Inasmuch as Israel succumbs to this temptation, she sins, she *gentiles*. In persecuting the followers of Jesus, Saul had been opposing the God of Israel. He had understood himself to be doing a righteous thing in ridding Israel of all traces of the rebellion led by Jesus, a man publicly displayed as shamed and punished for rebellion. But the confrontation with God on the Damascus road shows Paul that all Israel is rebellion against God, acting as wildly as any gentile people. The man on the cross was the righteous Israelite who did what it was given to the whole people to do. He bore the aggression of the world. He bore it until

for us, not because they are intrinsically able to oppose him. See Anderson B.W. *From Creation to New Creation* Minneapolis: Fortress 1994, 195-206.

⁶ All prognosis of disaster coming upon Israel is the speech of the prophets to Israel, and is not intended to be overheard by the gentiles.

⁷ Jesus is baptised by John 'to fulfil all righteousness', discussed by Marius Reiser *Jesus and Judgement: The Eschatological Proclamation in its Jewish Context* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997, 181-6.

⁸ See, for example, Luke 4.35 'Be quiet', Jesus said sternly. 'Come out of him'. Mark 5.8 Jesus had said to him 'Come out of this man, you evil spirit.' The legion of spirits return to the gentile animals to which they belong.

the force of it was broken and exhausted by fighting against God, and is taken captive to God. The act of crucifying Jesus was a pagan attack on the God of Israel, and thus a pagan sacrifice.⁹ In killing Jesus, the regime made the sacrifice that put the whole people out of relationship with their God. Yet this was not finally definitive about this act. Jesus made this the sacrifice that was righteous and life-generating. The cross was the act by which the regime *gentiled* itself and Jesus *righteoused* himself, and as such this was the joint act of God and men, in which the act of men was redeemed by God.

Jesus bears the fighting and resistance which is the gentile mode of the world. Whose blood flows? The statements '*It is by his wounds that you are healed*', and '*We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*' have different intentions: their middle terms have to be supplied.¹⁰ We need two accounts. His blood flowed for the healing of the nations. But this blood does not flow from wounds opened by the blows of the nations. Jesus judged the nations.¹¹ The gentiles are punished.¹² Though the blow delivered by God, it is struck by each against all. The gentiles become the punishment of God to each other. They have to drink from their own cup. But this takes place in the idiom of the blood of only one of their number, one of the nations elect for this purpose – Israel. Her blood runs, and therefore their blood has run. The gentiles are let, and Israel is the blood that flows out. All the blood shed by the gentiles is pointless suffering from the wounds they inflict on each other. Yet Israel's king really suffers in that his people, those he

⁹ Martin Hengel *Crucifixion in the ancient world and the folly of the message of the Cross* London SCM 1977; Harries J. *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity* New York: Cambridge University Press 1999, 140 and Kyle D.G. *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* London: Routledge 2001, 168 show types of punishment represent places on the shame scale. On the cross Jesus was hung up and displayed. Acts 5.30 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.* (10.39, 13.29) John 3.14 *As Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of man must be lifted up.*

1. To be hung up is to be shamed, to have all the honour and life drain out of you, until you have no honour or resources of reputation or support left to you. In the course of this being hung up the Son descends through all intermediary levels of status and being until he has no being left – a state of total shame. When he is raised from this lowest status those who shamed him are now shamed because they could not keep him down.

2. The animal is demonstrably lifted up and waved so it can be seen to be distinguished from all others (Leviticus 7.30). The blood is shown, and if the blood is acceptable in this first born then the blood of the whole flock is acceptable (Romans 11.16). It is made acceptable because in this event this particular lamb and sacrifice and intercession has been accepted, by God.

3. The animal is held up so the blood pours out, in such a way that it can be seen that blood is flowing (Exodus 29.12, Leviticus 4.18) – like a drink offering (Philippians 2.17) – that is not exhausted or interrupted because this is a living sacrificer (Romans 12.1) who pours, and continues to pour, his inexhaustible life into our economy, with the result that it is re-determined by him.

¹⁰ 1 Peter 2.24, Ephesians 1.7, Romans 3.25, 5.9.

¹¹ Reiser *Jesus and Judgement* 255 believes the scholarship of apocalyptic 'separates judgement and salvation as if they were not two sides of the same coin, two aspects of the one eschatological event.. Judgement is the obverse of salvation, and its necessary precondition.' See also O'Donovan *Desire of the Nations*, 141 Restoration of Christ from death is judgement against Israel and for Israel.

¹² The cross is the event of putting to the ban (*herem*). The holiness of God is such that his very approach causes things to burst into flame and what is not holy is burned away.

regards as his own substance, are wounded. He bears them and is covered in their blood. But because he has determined that they belong to him, their blood is his blood. Because it is his determination to drive them to atonement through this crisis, it must be laid to his account, yet he did not shed it. He is wounded because those who are his fight him and each other, and bleed. He is not wounded because they inflict wounds on him: they have no means of touching him. Death inflicts injuries on Jesus that the resurrection demonstrates have no duration or lasting reality. Yet their wounds are healed and lacks are supplied by him, in the form of his own substance – his blood. But this blood does not come from his wounds. It is the opponent that receives the wound that is fatal, and whose blood runs. The wounds are returned to the wounder.¹³ God redeems his people from Egypt but does not have to pay Egypt back an amount of some neutral substance (blood). God pays Egypt back in Egypt's currency, that of violence and fury. God refuses and returns this currency. The medium of this atonement is the whole economy of man, which is commandeered, seized and given a new function within the eschatological economy of God.

4.1.1 Baptism.

God's time resists our time and suffers no resistance.

Jesus and the Father are one and together in the work of the cross. For this reason it is a mistake to understand that death dealt finally with Jesus on the cross. On the cross Jesus called death together and *deathed* it.¹⁴ The cross extracted death from the world and balled it together into a place of no extension. The crucifixion is one event with two agents. We crucified him and God raised him. The cross is our act transformed by God into God's act with us and against us – resurrection.¹⁵ There are not two acts involving two agents

¹³ Mary Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999, suggests that this is the sense of retribution. Gunton C. E. *The Actuality of Atonement* 88 suggests the question of to whom the payment is made should be avoided. But here we see the devil paid back in his own currency.

¹⁴ My argument will be in line with that of Thomas G. Weinandy, OFM, Cap. *Does God Suffer?* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 2000 to which the answer is a sophisticated but emphatic No. It will be against that of Hegel *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Volume III 322-27, 326 'But this humanity in God – and indeed the most abstract form of humanity, the greatest dependent, the ultimate weakness, the utmost fragility – natural death. 'God himself is dead', it says in a Lutheran hymn, expressing an awareness that the human, the finite, the fragile, the weak, the negative, are themselves a moment of the divine, that they are within God himself.' Rather than follow Hegel, and the twentieth century theology that has followed him in this, for example, J. Moltmann *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* London: SCM 1974, I will attempt an approach that brings the cross into closer relation to the Old Testament portrayal of the utter refusal by the God of Israel of the gods of the nations. He names them *death*, engages them in battle, suffers their resistance and breaks it.

¹⁵ Zizioulas 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology' 9 'Since the end decides finally about the truth of history only those events leading to the end will be shown to possess true being or being *tout court*. The historical events of revelation, therefore, are true and real only because they lead to the end from which

here and so there is no problem of how the second agent engages and refers to the first act. It is not us, alone and by ourselves, that make a first act. Our rebellion does not construct some real position we succeed in holding against God. Even our rebellion is contained and co-opted, and made to serve no other future and hypostasis than resurrection. His resurrection is his being with men, albeit that this *being-with* sets mankind permanently under the canopy of the cross. The resurrection is not a moving away from the cross but is the vanishing of the sinful hypostasis that contained and secured us and the appearance of the Son who was always ahead of us. It was the coming together of Man with God.

Our crucifixion of him was not an act we succeeded in exerting over him by ourselves. The crucifixion was not our sole act that made God's act of resurrection possible. Rather, resurrection is what becomes of our act of crucifying him. The cross – our attack on God – is not the first act that sets us up as autonomous beings who have sent God away.¹⁶ Rather this death is just the sum of the deviations that represent the gentile mode. God has protected us from the consequences of our acts, but in the cross God no longer holds back. He lets us have the consequences of all our acts. We are punished by the return of all the violence we released into the world. He unites us with our act. It is not the act that we did alone, but our act with him, and thus his and our single co-work.¹⁷ Crucifixion of us, in the form of the crucifixion of our one representative, is the form in which resurrection comes to us.

4.1.2 Who pays?

The failure of the time of the Son who would not take up the Father's work.

Everything that the pagans do amounts to grief, decay, waste, fruitless suffering. They want what will never come. It is therefore bitter and pointless. Christ's suffering consisted in refusing and returning to them the projects of the gentiles.¹⁸ Their designs shatter on Christ. He retrieves the gentiles and bears them to that other set of designs which God has for them. Paul's own pre-conversion life consisted of avoiding suffering

they came into being, not in themselves. In such a view, not even the cross can have a meaning of its own; it is the Resurrection that reveals the meaning of the cross.'

¹⁶ On Luther and Nietzsche's 'God is dead' see Jüngel *God as Mystery of the World* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1983, 55-104.

¹⁷ Death and crucifixion is Christ in our medium; resurrection is Christ in his own medium. But our medium has no purpose other than to allow us to be readied for emergence into his medium - so our medium is only ours because it is his for us. I have reduced an explanation to a description.

¹⁸ O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 276 'The first consequence of this reorientation of society to individual wants is that suffering becomes unintelligible.'

the gentiles. Now Paul understands that it is God's will precisely that Israel bears and suffers the gentiles. This realisation becomes a hermeneutic of the cross. From the very beginning of God's history with Israel, God had borne Israel, and borne her against her own resistance.¹⁹ He bore her not so that she should suffer a gentile fate, but that by re-birth Israel should be delivered from the gentile hypostasis. God has suffered and waited and been patient, not so this state should continue and be ratified, but so that it should come to an end and Israel be elect and released from slavery to the gentile mode. The cross is therefore two sorts of suffering. It is the suffering of the gentiles, which is without purpose, and which God refuses. And it is the suffering of God which is patient, merciful and purposeful. Apart from God we are subjected to pointless, fruitless suffering – the problem identified by theodicy. Such suffering has no time and no end. But the suffering of God is the patient and purposeful waiting that redeems a people from futility. Since they are not their own but God's, the suffering of Christians is not fruitless but God's purposeful suffering and labouring by which the world is borne into new life.²⁰ The purposeless gentile mode will pay.

The event of the cross represents the gentiles having their way with Israel. The cross is a compressed symbol for the temple and thus for the whole cosmology of Israel. It is the microcosm and sign-system that I will discuss in 4.3.2. The tree that is induced to bear a single fruit represents Israel's Son-reproduction cosmology. By his performance of the cross Jesus imitates and parodies the world, performing the world's script in such a way as to take its script away from it and leave it bereft.²¹ The obedience of the Son takes the form of suffering alone the contradiction and resistance of the whole world. There is no one who follows the messiah to the cross, so Israel is a set with a single member. Jesus' recognition of what he has to do comes with the realisation that he is alone against the world. The Servant is not a mass movement but a single Israelite who has to undergo the baptism of the enmity of all. They are not his hosts and fellows, but his enemy, the river he has to go through and the drink he has to drink. Only by passing through him can they become the river of healing that flows from him, and through which even the

¹⁹ See Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery* 142-4 and Dunn *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* 499-532 for discussion.

²⁰ See Dunn *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* 482-87 and S. J. Hafemann *Suffering and the Spirit* Tübingen: Mohr 1986, 219 on Paul's 'imagery of a triumphal procession, with himself as the captive slave of God who is constantly being led to death. With this image Paul graphically portrays that it is through his daily experience of death = suffering that the glory and power of God are being revealed.'

²¹ The gentiles act alone, without and against the God of Israel. In Israel the God of Israel shows them that he holds all their action and that they have no answer to his challenges. This theory of the cross and Israel as deconstructive imitation relies on a continuum of action, such that action must be seen as new, so if it is foreseen (pre-parodied) it is not free and cannot be action, as we saw in 2.7.

gentiles may pass into Israel. God has fulfilled his righteousness against Israel, in Israel's despite, doing what Israel could not do.

4.1.3. Resurrection as generation and articulation of God's time for us.

The cross is the work of God seated on the throne in his rest and glory.²² It took the form of the alien sacrifice in which Israel played the part of the enemies of God and defiled herself. The resurrection demonstrated the cross to be the enthronement and exaltation of the God of Israel over his enemies. He is raised from them, but the cross which is the form of his exaltation over us remains the covering thrown over us, permanently characterising us as the conquered.²³ The resurrection baptised the world in this work and the medium it created so this medium lies over the world as the protective covering of this present age (*saeculum*). Baptism is the outer, and circumcision the inner, mode of this new medium.

By our baptism into this medium the cross also becomes our orthopaedic and our light and easy yoke. The resurrection is not the undoing of the event of the cross, but the transfer of that event from our fallen cosmology to God's place in which it is the finished work. The cross is a new environment that we are baptised and immersed in. It re-determines our metabolism. In it we learn to make one another present. The cross is the path, opened up by the Son, along which the Spirit now leads us into the territory of the resurrection. By the Spirit, the Son drives us across the same territory of the cross, acquiring the shape, skills and instincts he has acquired. Their way must be through the territory opened by this crucifixion, and it must be learned as a set of skills and form of action. We are the ones who must become other than we presently are. He will meet us, not as we were, but as we will be, transformed to become the people who work the estate and live in the house of the Father. He has come to us, as the one Son. He is with us as the many, the Spirit, in such a way that we are graspable to him whilst he is not graspable

²² Thus Pannenberg *Jesus God and Man* London: SCM 1968, 278: 'Luther agrees with the main line of the patristic doctrine of reconciliation in seeing the cross as an action of God in and through Jesus, not as an accomplishment of the man Jesus in relation to God.' According to Hengel 'Sit at my Right Hand' 162 the unity of action of the Son and the Father in the death of Christ on the cross (2Cor5.19) parallels the heavenly communion of Father and Son on the throne.

²³ The cross becomes that tragic or biological hypostasis in which we are confined until we are readied for a greater economy. T.F. Torrance *Space, Time and Incarnation* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1969, 85 believes that 'If we refuse to abstract it (the resurrection of Jesus Christ) from the field of living power disclosed in the Person of Christ, who is after all the subject of the resurrection, and think of it not only in terms of the successive and coherent structures of his life and work on earth but in terms of his whole space-time track in the cosmos' then 'we are able to discern the operational principles which...emerge at this level and control the boundary conditions left open at the lower level without abrogating them.'

for us. The coming again – the general resurrection – will be the completion of the resurrection in which this one will lead and stay with this many.

The cross replaces and re-establishes the earlier abortive beginnings of the world. It is the moment when God was united with his work and creature. The cross is, and remains, the beginning and basis of the creation, the coincidence of creation and new creation. It is the ongoing work of the Son of Man who opens to us the two territories of earth and heaven as a single territory.²⁴ It is because he is the end, who works this end for us, that the cross is this beginning for us. Thus it is the true beginning of time. The reconciliation of God and man in this event is the beginning that corresponds to the end God has prepared. We call the action of God new because it makes all complete, present and ever-new. The question is therefore not how much is old and how much is new. This would be to ask what units the work of God lets itself be measured in. The work of God lets itself be measured by the units of his devising that measure it good and make it good. This measure achieves that good shape and dimension that fits uniquely each particular, and fits each particular to the one end of its Creator.²⁵ Because it is new all the old is present, at last in its proper place.²⁶ Now the old will always be new, and never be disparaged or threatened by the possibility of being overtaken. It will be originating, of the beginning and thus original and true. The Father places Jesus first. He is appointed to the position of origin, pattern and principle. He is the first man, and time has no other meaning than proximity-and-orientation-and-movement in relation to him. Thus he is before Abraham and Adam. He is before all the founding figures named by gentiles. He is, as it seems to us, retrospectively, first. It is not the case that a first draft was abandoned, but rather that the world was competing drafts without number.²⁷ It is not then pre-existence but re-positioning the existence of everything that comes to compose the whole world.

The resurrection of Jesus was precisely not the general resurrection, but the provision of a longer gentler way to the general resurrection. This resurrection that is both commenced and delayed is the mode of God's hidden work of holding and training

²⁴ By travelling through all levels of the cosmos the God-man intimidates all would-be rebellious forces. Matthew 22.6-7 *The rest seized his servants, ill-treated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.* In the face of this threat the rebellious forces desert their leaders to return to the leadership of the one God. Isaiah 24.21 *In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon.*

²⁵ See 2.2. Measure is agreed upon by the parties as a subsidiary work to the work of improving their performance.

²⁶ Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery* 124 argues that 'new and old stand in a reciprocal relationship: new revelation is always meta-revelation, given shape and texture by a charismatic reading of the old... instrumental for the understanding of the old, the 'proto-revelation'.'

²⁷ We met a multiple drafts model with Dennett in 2.6.

a people, by the Spirit.²⁸ The resurrection was the crucifixion of the many by the One. It took the form of the crucifixion of one by the many. The crucifixion and resurrection of that one without the many made this many the dead he was raised from. The many have been corralled by the death that his resurrection has imposed upon them. Their death is now not at all their death, but entirely his death, the death that holds – not him – but those he has imposed it on. Now they can be taught and slowly be supplied, by the Spirit, with the resurrection. It can be supplied by the one who has risen from them and is therefore able to be with them, without their sin and death. The resurrected one is the Lord, the Spirit, the true and faithful servant who will not waste his talents or lose a single member of the flock he has gathered. He has worked, and his work is united with its harvest. He has paid.

4.2 The indivisibility of God's time.

The one testament and witness.

Does the Spirit work in the same way in the Old Testament and the New? Does he work differently after the crucifixion, or resurrection, or ascension? The character of the worker and of his labour do not change, but the work itself alters. On the seventh day, the day that includes all days, this Servant sat down at the right hand of the Father. The Old Testament action of the Spirit – that is the spiritual salvation history of Israel – is woven together to make one man, a single exempla of the creature who is with God. The trauma involved in the impact of this meeting of God and his creation registers as the crucifixion²⁹ It is an impact only because the creation is fallen, not perfected, but this impact represents the instantaneous perfecting of that creation. The resurrection is the joining of that finished work with the worker who has finished his creation and is together with it. The crucifixion is the instant of the completion of the work, the world transformed from fall to completion in a moment. It is the completion of the single testament of the one God.³⁰

²⁸ Pannenberg *Jesus God and Man* 66 'The earthly Jesus's expectation was .. directed...toward the universal resurrection of the dead, which would of course include himself should his death precede it. Then when his disciplines were confronted by the resurrected Jesus they no doubt also understood this as the beginning of the universal resurrection of the dead.'

²⁹ See Gerhard Forde 'The Work of Christ' in C. Braaten & R.W. Jenson *Christian Dogmatics* Philadelphia: Fortress 1984 on the encounter of God and man as collision. This collision theory of Forde avoids putting the encounter of man with God on neutral ground, so the question of *how* does not seek an extrinsic answer and thus one in terms of an outside causal and explanatory nexus, a mechanism. The encounter is on God's territory and terms, or, in the terms I shall use in Chapter 5, in his medium and economy.

³⁰ Thus Wright *Climax of the Covenant* 151 'Because the messiah represents Israel, he is able to take on himself Israel's curse and exhaust it...The crucifixion of the Messiah is, one might say, the quintessence of the curse of exile, and its climatic act.'

In the course of the history of Israel, the Spirit assembled and built up Israel to the status of the one completed and ascended man who sits with the Father. When that man was with God, creature and Creator together on the same bench, the Holy Spirit could replicate that man, and the freedom of creation that he represented, everywhere. So though there were many false starts, they were not finally false because as a result of them the full man arrived, born of the virgin. There was no discernible process building up to him other than that represented by the whole history of this people. The fullness of time, the Ancient of Days, himself arrived. By the arrival of this fullness of time, all Israel's time and waiting was redeemed. Time, on this theological definition, is the union of God's work and its fruit, time complete with its outcome. The eschatological economy of God, which we discussed above as the Sabbath, cannot be interrupted by the other economies of time of other rival lordships. The seventh day creates these (six) days. He creates for us these defined economies of time in which we may increasingly participate in the fullness of the resurrection, the eschatological economy of God.

The activity of the Many together make one man, the Son.³¹ I said in Chapter 2 that they do not merely symbolise him but are the parts adopted by the Spirit out of which the Son is assembled and made. They stand in for him in the sense that they are proved to have been really practising, waiting, building and so by his Spirit properly being him, the Coming Man. Thus eschatologically and retrospectively, all those in the history of Israel who appear to have been waiting vainly, were in fact waiting patiently as faithful witnesses. If he never comes this time would be wasted time, invested but without return. Until he comes we cannot say in what sense this has been time at all. But if we wait for him it will be not lost time but the time in which we learned to ask him to come to us, to do his work, to receive him and become his people. Then we will be entrusted with much more time.

Since the Son did come in the single person of the God-man, time was redeemed and none of this waiting was in vain. The man who is with God can count time and tell history complete with its end.³² He can open the scroll and from it bring Israel alive. This instructor can make the scriptures of Israel's own self-articulation effective for the transformation of the gentiles too. He can tell times apart, setting live and formative time on one side, and barren and still-born time on the other. This sort of lived time will be

³¹ 'Homoousion' means 'one', 'united': it does not mean one entity or one single stuff defined by an concept of substance. Being does not qualify oneness: triune oneness and manyness qualifies being.

³² He is the one who can open the scroll and from it bring Israel alive, and the instructor who can make the scriptures of Israel's own self-articulation effective for the transformation of the gentiles too.

found to have been the time in which God's servant learned his work. The righteousness of Israel that achieved no actuality has ceded its place to the righteousness that did. Since no previous Adam succeeded in holding on to his office and place, the God-man has become on the cross the retrospectively real and lasting Adam.

If Jesus is Christ, all Israel now is Christ. Israel has been *Christed*.³³ If Christ triumphs, and he insists that we are with him, then we have triumphed with him. Then retrospectively we can say that the children of Israel were indeed waiting for him, and that they were also rewarded with him. He is their reward, for they will have become children of Abraham by the faithfulness of Christ.

I have suggested that Israel's political claim must be related to Israel's cosmology. The work of the Servant takes the biological idioms of reproduction, respiration and consumption, and commandeers all would-be autonomous nature for the work of God. The issues sketched in this chapter can scarcely be answered by a biblical studies that does not understand itself as biblical theology. I argue in 5.1 that autonomous exegesis without constitutive relation to doctrine and philosophy cannot read Israel's scriptures as a political-cosmological world-claim, that is as a claim to commandeer, transform and re-employ the world. Without an understanding of the commanded nature of Israel's action, as action that points to and participates in the new economy of action opened to God's people, modern biblical studies problematises Israel's liturgical labour and therefore her ritual action, sacrifice and temple. Must the academic attempt to give an account of Israel divide Israel from her God? Must it fail to hear Israel's word as offer and command? Does it not just represent the claim of those forces that intend to divide the one creation of God into the separate and autonomous realms of nature, on the one hand, and the intellectual, cultural and religious realms of subjectivity on the other? Such an academic project divides the people of Israel from their king, the body from the head, the people from their theological purpose and eschatological determination. It divides the indivisible work of God. We have discussed the world as God's task, place, and reward for Israel. I have suggested that the conceptuality, of on one hand, relatedness, participation and incorporation and, on the other, of command and transformation must form the whole centre of theology.³⁴ Jesus Christ appears against the resistance of what is, in the twofold form of (1) substance, nature, biology, and (2) politics, violence and the contest of

³³ The obedience of the Son takes the form of suffering of the contradiction and of being alone, so that Israel is a set with a single member.

³⁴ Such participative conceptuality appears in this thesis as affiliation, adoption, friendship, kinship, the exercise of hospitality and possession, righteousness, the economy of response and affective continuum.

claims. Twentieth century New Testament studies has perpetuated the modern division of discourse between cosmology and politics, between nature and action.

Can biblical studies talk about Israel's cosmological claim as a theological claim to be the first creature of the creation of God? The cosmological and political idiom of the Old and New Testaments has been neglected by biblical studies. Perhaps this neglect is inevitable to any New Testament studies that does not understand itself to be fully a study of the Old Testament.³⁵ I have suggested that pneumatology must include discussion of blood and seed, of sonship and the messiah, and holiness and purity. This cosmology must play a greater part in the theological account. It is a cosmology of creaturehood, an economy that receives its definition not from an autonomous economy of nature, but from the action of God who draws his creatures into his action. We must understand 'spiritual' to mean greater biological reality, not less, greater embodiment, not disembodiment. The language of biology that describes reproduction is not to be set in any strong contrast with the language of spiritual election. Kinship requires the two modes of elective and biological kinship. One may not be set over another.³⁶ It makes little difference whether we say it is the concerted obedience of many generations, or the failure of obedience of many generations made good by the obedience of one, that makes Israel obedient to the political and paideutic task she is given.

³⁵ The problem is recognised by H.H. Schmid 'Creation, Righteousness and Salvation' (1973) in Anderson B.W. *Creation in the Old Testament* Philadelphia: Fortress 1984, 102: 'In recent decades the concept of creation has been largely ignored in theology. According to the broad *communis opinio* it has been agreed that a theology of creation does indeed belong to Christian theology but that it must be accorded a secondary position to christology or soteriology.'

³⁶ New Testament studies sees Jesus's faith in abstraction from cosmology of Israel and so fideistically or morally, rather than the relational-participational view that understands it as the function of the adherence of Spirit and Father which brings success - glory - in the form of a host of sons as I argue here. H. Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families* London: Routledge 1997, 32 for example treats 'fictive kinship' as though it were the opposite of real, because biological, kinship. I suggest we should understand fictive as a synonym for adoptive, elective. A household head can adopt a son, say by raising a freed slave to this status, and this elective kinship will be cemented by marriage and the arrival of heirs biologically related to both parties. On this basis fictive kinship means only kin elect, the source of future kin. Elective relationships, relationships 'by faith' are in the long run constitutive of biological relationships.

4.3 Creation theology: ecology as middle.

Colin Gunton argues for the continuing usefulness of the concept of sacrifice. He believes that the notion of sacrifice can be supported by an appeal to its derivation ‘from something deep in human nature, of such a kind that it appears to be rooted in a universal or near universal feature of our life on earth.’³⁷ One problem though, is that sacrifice is archaic. ‘We no longer slaughter animals ritually’. So ‘to call the death of Jesus a sacrifice is obviously a metaphor: although there is a death, it is not on an altar.’³⁸ Metaphor allows us, Gunton argues, to extrapolate from what the ancients did to what God does for us. Sacrifice of animals has been replaced by a sacrifice of thanks and praise, and yet this represents no diminution of the cost of this sacrifice.³⁹ According to Hebrews, ‘*It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*’.⁴⁰ Yet blood was offered in the Temple precisely because it did indeed, not finally, but yearly, take sins away. Of course it is God who removed this sin. We refer to blood as summary statement of all those constituents of the world of his creation, bulls and goats included, that are adopted and employed by God as the medium by which he effects this atonement for Israel.⁴¹ These specific constituents do not have this function intrinsically. They are not natural symbols. They have this function within and as a result of the history that Israel and her God have shared. They are the private language and conversation of Israel and her God, of which gentiles have no knowledge. This theological hermeneutic of sacrifice has to be supplied to Gunton’s account.

Sacrifice then is not simply the foregoing of one thing for another. These are not natural symbols in a zero-sum economy. It is ‘not simply the offering of a human life but of the concentrated summation of humanity: it is the kind of offering that, so to speak,

³⁷ Colin E. Gunton ‘The Sacrifice and the Sacrifices: From metaphor to transcendental?’ in Feenstra & Plantinga *Trinity, Incarnation and Philosophy* 210.

³⁸ Gunton ‘The Sacrifice and the Sacrifices’ 217. Young F.M. *Sacrifice and the Death of Christ* London: SPCK 1975, 101-4 believes we can empathise with ancient societies that practised sacrifice. Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement* 111 and 122, argues that the concept of metaphor is the means by which to understand sacrifice as transcendental. Barth *Church Dogmatics* 4.1 explores sacrifice only briefly, 275-83, because this is 275 ‘a form which is now rather remote from us’. This remoteness is of course 287 ‘only a particular form of the problem of time’, and thus of the issue of supersession we discussed in 3.1-4.

³⁹ Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement*, 120-5.

⁴⁰ Hebrews 10.4

⁴¹ Theories of sacraments represent an unfortunately abbreviated doctrine of creation that does not understand that God is able to make all the products of the earth of his creation and serve to nourish and build up his community and make it present to himself as his people. In this creation anything will serve as ‘bread’, as that means whereby we are made holy and presentable to him and brought into his presence, but only that does serve as bread which in a joint history (described as the history of instructor and learner in 2.1) has been agreed and understood between God and Israel. God and Israel create the symbols in the course of their conversation which takes the idiom of Israel’s learning and increasing participation in the life God extends to Israel.

longs to offer not only itself but all flesh. That one offering can stand in for the others because, in anticipation of the eschatological presenting of all spotless before the throne, it takes the representative and random sample of fallen flesh and offers it, through the Spirit perfect to the Father.⁴² It intends to teach all flesh to present itself to God, by inducting it into a new medium, and new currency and form of payment and accounting. 'Sacrifice, in this concrete realisation of the transcendental, is the expression and outworking of the inner-trinitarian relations of giving and receiving. The inner being of God is a taxis, a dynamic orderedness, of love construed in terms of mutual and reciprocal gift and reception. If the sacrifice that is Jesus's human life and death is a realisation in time of the eternal taxis, then it is indeed universal.'⁴³

God the Father 'gives up' his only Son, allows him to be delivered into the hands of sinful men. Jesus lays down his life, and...offers his humanity, made perfect through suffering to the Father. So it is with the Spirit. As the gift of the Father he is the *aparchai*, first fruits, of the perfecting action of God in Christ. Although, under the conditions of the Fall, the sacrifice of Jesus must take the form of spilling of blood, that aspect is not of the essence of sacrifice, which is rather to be found in the notion of gift. It is the Father's giving of the Son, the Son's giving of himself to the Father and the Spirit's enabling of the creation's giving in response that is at the centre... It is as a dynamic of giving and receiving, asymmetrical rather than merely reciprocal, that the communion that is the triune life must be understood.⁴⁴

With all this we must agree. Next we must ask what else must be said in order to say this.

Israel exists in a single economy with the peoples of the world, and with the natural world in the form of the land of Israel. On both these definitions Israel makes a strong distinction between itself as the people elect and becoming holy, and the world. The natural world is the proper location of this work of Israel's political self-identification and witness, and provides the biological idiom in which this witness takes place.⁴⁵ It is the medium that makes sacrifice intelligible. It is the teaching of Genesis 2 that none of the animals are sufficient for the purpose of friendship with man, that man is given the task of stewarding and representing them. On Israel's estimation the gentiles are also animals, the helpless functions of their animal appetites.⁴⁶ Yet because Israel also shares with the gentiles a complex system of what we may call animal semiotics, she can

⁴² Gunton 'The Sacrifice and the Sacrifices' 221

⁴³ Gunton 'The Sacrifice and the Sacrifices' 221.

⁴⁴ Gunton *The One, the Three, and the Many* 225n 19.

⁴⁵ C.T.R. Haywood links Israel's sacrifice to her cosmology in 'Sacrifice and World Order: Some Observations on Ben Sirah's Attitude to the Temple Service, Sacrifice and Redemption' in Sykes S. W. *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991.

⁴⁶ Richard H. Bell *No one Seeks for God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1.18-3.20* Tübingen: Mohr 1998, 131 'Paul believes that not only are the gentiles like beasts; Jews also have become like animals.'

bear witness to the lordship of the God of Israel over the nations. This Israel does in the terms set out in Leviticus of the atonement of man by animal, in which the man with his hand on the head of the sheep recapitulates the relationship of man with the rest of the natural world.⁴⁷ Man is both one animal among many, in a single ecosystem with them, and also the priest who calls and names creation. He is its climax. Israel is the priest of the gentile-animals, and Israel puts his hand on their head, for this is the proper relationship between them.

4.3.1 Kill and Eat: Adam's place in the animal ecosystem.

Sacrifice is an act of selection of one animal from the many animals by which process the whole natural and political world is ordered. Killing is just one moment in the intricate and multiple processes that define the use man may make of the animal world and his own position in it.⁴⁸ The social body is formed in selecting and processing animal bodies. Such selection takes the form of killing because, like planting and breeding, harvesting and processing, killing and eating is intrinsic to our physical presence in the world. Eating animals is the way we navigate through the food-chain and moral world. Killing, eating, and mating are forms of giving and receiving life, and of making and receiving meaning. They bear meaning because the human species lives by means of reaching out, selecting and communicating, taking to himself, and killing and eating. In attempting to say why the killing of animals plays a part in the worship of the God of Israel the modern theological literature of sacrifice addresses the wrong question.⁴⁹ It is not the killing, but the whole complex action of selecting and taking, that is given to man. In the Law this action is given to Israel as the proper and permitted mode for man. We must sow and plant, and reap and kill and eat to live. For Israel a proportion of this whole complex of mundane action, that includes killing and eating, must be done before God in his temple. By it, Israel understands that the creation represents God's hospitality and invitation; her action in the world is the means of life he licenses, and by returning to God as gift a

⁴⁷ Leviticus 1.4 'He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.'

⁴⁸ This must go some way to answering the question of the intelligibility of sacrifice asked by N.T. Wright *The New Testament and the People of God* London: SPCK 1992, 274 'We know that the great majority of Jews took part in the sacrificial system, but we do not know *why*... according to what inner rationale was the killing of animals or birds thought to *effect* atonement and forgiveness.' See the discussion of Bruce D. Chilton 'The Hungry Knife: Towards a sense of sacrifice' in Carroll M. Daniel, David J.A Clines & Philip R. Davies *The Bible in Human Society: Essays in honour of John Rogerson* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1995.

⁴⁹ See 3.2.3 and Stanley K Stowers *Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* New Haven: Yale University Press 1994, 206-13.

proportion of the creation he leases to her, Israel demonstrated her progress towards competence as custodian of his creation.

In the Jerusalem temple one lamb is burned, in the morning, and one in the evening. It is an unceasing event, perhaps, like the Sabbath, one that generates time. The smoke of the lamb, wine, grain cakes, incense and prayers of the worshippers, rise to connect earth to heaven as though forming an umbilical cord.⁵⁰ The sacrifices form the *Kavod* or *Shekinah* that fills and constitutes the temple.⁵¹ The smoke rises, turns to cloud, the clouds gather and water falls on the Land, making the crops grow and animals and people flourish. Dew, rain and children are idioms of God's mercy. The *Shekinah* is both God's arrival and the priest's protection from the effects of God's arrival.⁵² The temple is a sophisticated semiotic mechanism that is able to link divine presence in the temple to a physical outworking in the fertility of land and people.⁵³ Each sacrifice is consumed to nothing. But taken together as the single project of the formation of this people, the temple sacrifices are not burned to no purpose. If this people does not give up, but continues to sacrifice and keep the lamp alight, the bridegroom will find them. The light and fire of the old covenant will result in the appearing of the new. It will be

⁵⁰ The burnt offering represents the action of heaven's reaching down to earth, by which earth is brought into union with heaven and made one circulation and economy with it, the union of man's stewardship of his flock with God's stewardship of his flock. The sacrificed lamb is not going on a single journey upwards from man to God: Israel is not in a simple sense giving a lamb to God. Israel is returning one of God's lambs to God. Israel does this to demonstrate good use of the flock God has entrusted to Israel. Husbandry and livestock are the idiom of this single economy (communion) of God with man. The sign 'lamb' represents this complex asymmetrical reciprocity and stewardship. The lamb becomes fire – communion that makes itself visible. The equation of bread (and meat) and body ('*This is my body given for you*') is an invitation to eat what the host provides from the harvest and permitted animals of his estate. Bread and world are metonyms. Jesus fills not only bread (the archetypal seed-product), but the whole elemental stuff which the cosmos is, so bread represents the whole of the rest of material creation and ecosystem. As bread the whole earth goes through man to be re-constituted as itself. See the discussion in Douglas 'The Eucharist: Its Continuity with the Bread Sacrifice of Leviticus' *Modern Theology* 15 1999, 209-24.

⁵¹ According to Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* 79-80, the book of Leviticus works on complex sets of analogies. When the carcass of the slaughtered animal is opened the organs lie in a set of relationships also used for purposes of theological illustration. The soft inner organs are protected by a layer of fat: every opened carcass looks like a figure of eight, the fat separating the top half from the bottom, but equally holding the top and bottom together and comprising the whole medium by which they meet. This fatty section is the animal equivalent of the layer of cloud that hides the top of mount Sinai from the bottom. The *Shekinah* by which Israel is brought together with God at Sinai, is reiterated in every sacrifice in which the fat is set between the top and bottom parts of the animal carcass, so the three-level construction of meat on the sacrificial fire reiterates the coming together of God and Israel. The concept of place within structure is the key to reading the theology on display in Israelite sacrifice.

⁵² David Kupp *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine presence and God's people in the First Gospel* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996 asks how the *Shekinah* can be both the presence of God and the hiding of the presence of God. I have argued that apocalyptic should be understood as the process of learning to see what goes on in the temple. In 3.1 and 3.5 I prepared for the argument of 6.1 that scripture protects us from, and prepares us for, the impact of this glory.

⁵³ See William P. Brown *The Ethos of the Cosmos: The Genesis of Moral Imagination in the Bible* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1999, 73-4, and Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* 54-79 for discussion of the connection between divine presence and the fertility of the land.

demonstrated that Israel's obedient labour in the place given him in the material world will have served in the preparation of this people and the final coming to them of their king. The biological nexus will be taken up and adopted by the Spirit for the place of the coming together of God and man.

4.3.2 The temple as microcosm and sign system.

World of gentiles as God's task for Israel.

Israel's natural cosmology is her description of the place for the gentiles, and of the task entrusted to her of bringing them to the one God. The world, in the form of the land of Israel, is the medium of God's action. The temple represents the land and provides a matrix of analogies with which complex theological statements about God's relationship to his people and the world he gives them may be made.⁵⁴ The tree-shaped Menorah joins the idiom of light and flame to that of growth. The light of the Menorah, the smoke of incense and the sacrifices compose the cloud of the *Shekinah* that represents the presence of God with his people and the single divine economy he prepares them for.⁵⁵ The temple represents the tree and the garden of the first chapters of Genesis, Eden come to Zion.⁵⁶ Zion is the highest among the mountains that holds down the forces of chaos and sustains the first act of creation of separation of sea from land.⁵⁷ It is the foundation, corner-stone and navel. Creation continues to be a strenuous work. It involves a battle against the forces.⁵⁸ 'The language of combat, victory and enthronement' must continue to appear in any account of the createdness of the world.⁵⁹ The world is in rebellion. Adam has not given the creaturely forces the leadership and discipline they need, with the result that they have become unruly local centres of recalcitrance that stock-pile power, rather than return it to God.

⁵⁴ Samuel E. Balentine *The Torah's Vision of Worship* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress 1999, 126-31 understands the 'Covenant as sanctuary building and world building'. Balentine, like Fretheim, thinks 126 'the liturgy of covenant-making can be properly understood as a liturgy of creation-keeping.'

⁵⁵ Fire is analogous to divine creative action. Fire and light relate to the natural processes of growth and decay. Below in 4.5.2 I link fire, light and becoming to the cosmology which gives meaning to practices involving sacrificial fire and light.

⁵⁶ See Brown *The Ethos of the Cosmos* 133-43, and also Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* London: SPCK 1978 112-76.

⁵⁷ See J.D. Levenson *Sinai to Zion An entry into the Jewish bible* Minneapolis: Winston 1985, 133-35.

⁵⁸ C. E. Arnold *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The concept of power in Ephesians in light of its historical setting* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1989, 123-34, 155 relates the cross and Christ's ascension journey as a cosmic military campaign by which order is restored to the cosmos.

⁵⁹ Levenson *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* xxv believes that 'the language of combat, victory and enthronement...is not given its due'. 24 The writer of psalm 74 for example 'acknowledges the reality of militant, triumphant and persistent evil, but he steadfastly and resolutely refuses to accept this evil as final and absolute.'

But in the cult of Israel the now-ordered waters of chaos appear here as the spring that waters the world. The creation and cultivation of the world, and the building and maintenance of the tabernacle are homologous activities.⁶⁰ The temple radiated justice, the very sight of which throws all the (unjust) rulers of foreign peoples into panic. The temple is the stronghold that opposes all other strongholds and palaces, polities and parties built on or against the land of Israel.⁶¹ It is also the bench and throne of God, on which God sits and invites the Son to sit with him, in the Sabbath act of judgement that finds the completed creation good.⁶²

In response to the scholarship of Israel's cosmology we may ask a number of questions. Do the temple and ritual represent the future creation together with Adam? Does the high priest portray Adam, the first and last man, on the Day of Atonement?⁶³ The temple is the tree of good and evil and its fruit.⁶⁴ The roots of this tree go down and its branches reach up like those of the Menorah to fill the world and secure it to the heavens. Should we understand the whole line of mankind as single organism, the future generations of which might be likened to the branches and the patriarchs to its roots? Should we see the man crucified on the tree as the tree of the new and united mankind who sums up and recapitulates the being of the whole cosmos? By his resurrection the new Adam returns to his place in the garden of the world, its summation and priest. He knits together and recapitulates all modes and behaviours to make a single cosmos that is alive, beautiful and eternal. Such would be the result of linking Israel's teaching about holiness to an Adam Christology. In the next section I link purity and holiness to the election of Israel as servant and witness to the holy God. God's faithfulness and Israel's obedience result in many sons. There is a reluctance in the literature to say what the purpose of purity is. In Chapter 2 I suggested that because God keeps her apart from

⁶⁰ Brown *The Ethos of the Cosmos* 141-51 agrees.

⁶¹ Levenson *Sinai to Zion* 147 'The Temple city complex was thought to be a source of revelation in and of itself.' See Keel *The Symbolism of the Biblical World* 269-79 for the iconography of the king as temple builder and priest.

⁶² See 3.6.1.

⁶³ Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery* 37-8 discusses the Son of Man/messiah as the mystery that is hidden.

⁶⁴ Discussion of the relationship of man and tree is scarce. Acts 5.30 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree* (10.39, 13.29). He was hung up and displayed on this tree. John 3.14 *As Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of man must be lifted up*. Are tree and the mountain metonyms for the complete future earth that is heaven-and-earth, the glory of the appearance of God? Is the curse of the Law, (Deutonomy 21.22) cause or effect? Does Deutonomy tell us that a man on the tree pollutes and kills off the tree? Does the messiah hung on the tree render the law and temple cult barren or even malignant? Does 'He became sin for us' mean that being hung on a tree he rendered the land 'sin', barren, extinguishing the continuum of divine action? The tree appears as wisdom and its fruit in the wisdom literature. By being hung on it, does he kill off one version of the tree, change the fruit of the tree from evil to good? Is the cross the tree or trees of Genesis 2? The man hung on the tree is its fruit. Does the man bear the tree, such that it grows from him, so he is the continuation of the family line of Israel? Is Jesus claiming to be the true tree and fruit, such that present Jerusalem is a false tree and fruit?

other influences, Israel learns her character solely from him. Her life is a learning from him and transformation by him for the sake of the world to which she is his witness. We may therefore say that Israel is holy *for the world*.

4.3.3 The house that makes the people holy.

From Neusner, Milgrom, Douglas, Maccoby and Feldman we have five accounts of purity and holiness. Purity means readiness directed to the achievement of holiness. It is the means by which changes and growth in holiness may be accounted for. Accounting for holiness is the means by which growth in holiness is achieved. Purity indicates where holiness has been, should be, or is but should not be. It is evidence of the work of the generation and regeneration of a holy people. Maccoby summarises purity as the ritual proper to the court of the great king. Gaining purity is not something that has to be done before a priest may go in and serve. It is the commencement of the demonstration at the temple, and thus before the nations, of the holy character of God.⁶⁵

Feldman believes the holiness spectrum is a flexible way to explore the issues of classification, holiness and purity.⁶⁶ He distinguishes idealist and realist approaches. The first focuses on the human ability to classify the world. From this perspective holiness is wholeness and freedom from imperfection and anomaly. It assumes stable fixed structures or processes in terms of which deviations can be measured. The realist approach concentrates on the realities of death and life and is concerned with irreversible events less amenable to static structural analysis.⁶⁷ The architecture of the tabernacle and camp which classifies space into zones separated by boundaries is the clearest expression of the holiness spectrum.

According to Jacob Milgrom no single theory will cover the entire complex of sacrifices. The whole is a matter of ongoing negotiation as Israel progressively refines its understanding and frees itself from clumsier and more pagan formulations.⁶⁸ We may not insist on too much consistency, for Leviticus, like any biblical book, is a work in

⁶⁵ This starting to get ready, though it commences out on the land or in the city, because it is a matter of *putting things aside* things to take to the Temple and *going up* to the Temple, is all part of the service. Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 485 'If a person sets aside an animal for a given sacrifice the animal becomes holy...when the householder wishes to separate the heave offering, he must both form the proper intention to do so and orally announce that intention, designating the portion of the crop to be deemed holy.' Sanders E.P. *Judaism Practice and Belief 63 BCE - 66CE* London: SCM 1992, 147-54.

⁶⁶ Feldman *Biblical and post-Biblical Defilement and Mourning*, and see Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* 650-79 and Childs *Old Testament in a Canonical Context* 84-90.

⁶⁷ Philip Jenson *Graded Holiness A Key to the Priestly Perception of the World* Sheffield 1992, 60-79 for discussion of Feldman and structuralist approaches to purity.

⁶⁸ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 2, 1368-71 .

progress, the work of the oral Torah. The incompleteness of scripture indicates that Israel's battle against pagan beliefs was a gradual process.⁶⁹ Central to Milgrom's view is his 'Priestly Picture of Dorian Gray'. Sin does not scar the face of the sinner because it flies from the scene of its occurrence to the temple to take its toll there.⁷⁰ But even those who do not sin are guilty if they have allowed the wicked to flourish and so contributed to the pollution of the sanctuary. The sanctuary is holy and awesome because it is powerful enough to process away the insufficiencies of Israel. Like any powerful piece of machinery, it is out-of-bounds. Because it is utterly pure, it draws to itself the insufficiencies from all over the land, and they accumulate here until they are dealt with. The sanctuary gathers and holds sin as a filter gathers dirt: this dirt represents the cleaning work it has done on Israel over the year.⁷¹ On the day of atonement it swept finally into the centre of the sanctuary through the *hilasterion* and into oblivion.

Leviticus is a polemic against the idea that physical impurity arises from the activity of demons who must be appeased or exorcised. In Israel, impurity was harmless.⁷² Purification is neither healing nor theurgy. Lay persons, but not priests, might contact impurity with impunity, though they must not delay their purification in case their impurity affects the sanctuary.⁷³ Scale disease is part of a symbolic system that sorts anything that looks like death with death.⁷⁴ The highly visible, biblically impure scale disease, symbolises the death process as much as the loss of vaginal blood and semen. Based in the Mishnah's association of skin disease with slanderous gossip, destructive of people's reputations and appearances, Kugler suggests 'skin disease' represents an identity damaged by slander.⁷⁵ Ambiguous appearances and false representations in Israel

⁶⁹ In 5.4 we shall see Maimonides arguing that it was also a function of the particular gentile behaviour it had to challenge and oppose.

⁷⁰ This is the view of Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 257-60.

⁷¹ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 260 'On the analogy of Oscar Wilde's novel, the Priestly Writers would claim that sin may not leave its mark on the face of the sinner, but it is certain to mark the face of the sanctuary; and unless it is expunged, God's presence will depart.'

⁷² Preuss *Old Testament Theology* Volume 1, 258-9 also believes Israel showed little concern with demons. J.D. Crossan *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1991, 313-18 suggests demons are representations of foreign, gentile forces.

⁷³ Kugler 'Holiness, Purity, the Body and Society: the Evidence for theological conflict in Leviticus' *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 76 1997, 3-27, argues that Leviticus 16-27 shows an Israel-wide pervasive democratic holiness system, and that holiness, contained within the sanctuary, is largely unaffected by the impurity of the general population. In Leviticus 1-16 things are intrinsically impure, and debate is about what goes in and out of the body. In Leviticus 16-27 all Israel is holy, any incursion of impurity meets the sacred head-on, the violator stands no chance of survival, and impurities are fatal to their bearers before they can take any sacrificial remedial action.

⁷⁴ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 44 'The cultic sphere attests a progressive reduction of religious impurity in all three primary human sources: scale disease, pathological flux, and corpse contamination.'

⁷⁵ Kugler 'Holiness, Purity, the Body and Society' 25. Neusner 'Judaism after the destruction of the temple' 676 argues that skin disease was given a spiritualised, re-accounted to be caused by slander, so now it is gossip that makes unclean.

are a theological problem. The purity legislation is the means by which those who have been victims of slander and false witness, are publicly re-honoured and given as it were a new face. The appearance on a body of a skin 'disease', the analogical message of 'death', is used as an opportunity to review the life-renewing power of the God of Israel. The concern of this legislation is not in the biological pathology of bodies but in the incorporation of all her members into Israel. The forces pitted in cosmic struggle are the forces of life and death set loose by man himself through his obedience to, or defiance of, God's commandments.⁷⁶ Despite all the changes manifested in the evolution of Israel's impurity laws, the objective remains to sever impurity from the demonic and to reinterpret it as the divine imperative to Israel to reject as death whatever he does not command.

Murder is the central theme of the purity laws.⁷⁷ All life is inviolable. A small number of edible animals are excepted when they are slaughtered properly, their blood drained and thereby returned to God. 'He wants meat and he has to kill to get it. Man is a criminal only if he appropriates the animal's lifeblood. But if he returns it to its divine source via the altar he commits no crime.'⁷⁸ The blood of the purification offering purges the sanctuary by absorbing its impurities. The priest eats the flesh of the purification offering: impurity does not pollute him as long as he serves God in his sanctuary. The fundamental premise of the purity law is that human beings can curb their violent nature through ritual means, specifically, a dietary discipline. This will drive home the point that all life is shared, even with the animals, and inviolable. The only exception is the meat of the animals given by God. Means of meeting the demands of holiness multiplied in order to provide for everyone atonement and membership in Israel. The reddish substances made cheap blood surrogates in purificatory rites for the scale-diseased and corpse-contaminated persons.⁷⁹ The central concern is not to let poverty prevent the very poor from bringing some offering: they must not be disbarred from Israel.

Hyam Maccoby argues that purity is an issue for priests only.⁸⁰ Off-duty priests and all Israel are in a state of impurity, which we might interpret as 'unreadiness', most of the time and since the demise of the Temple, all the time. On this basis gaining purity is

⁷⁶ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 59.

⁷⁷ Feldman *Biblical and post-Biblical Defilement* 139-40.

⁷⁸ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1, 736.

⁷⁹ Milgrom *Leviticus* Volume 1 46 explains that the law-makers interpreted sacrificial rules to foster the individual conscience. They ordained that repentance converts an intentional sin into an unintentional one, making it eligible for expiation.

⁸⁰ Maccoby, Hyam *Ritual and Morality The Ritual Purity System and its Place in Judaism* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999, 9-11.

not something that has to be done before a priest may go in and serve, but is the first part of this service. 'Impurity' is the state or moment of starting to get ready to do purity, and even this starting to get ready is part of doing purity, part of the temple service.

Ritual purity has to do with the Temple.

It is simply the protocol for entry into the palace of the King. The priestly people is privileged to have his residence in their midst, and must consequently comport themselves in accordance with the prescribed etiquette...the Israelites have this privilege of service in the portals of God...instead of wiping their feet, they must cleanse their whole body of impurities which, outside the Temple, have no negative meaning...The rest of mankind...are not unclean in the special sense of Temple-uncleanness; only Israelites can incur this uncleanness, because they are the chosen house-servants of God.⁸¹

This approach allows us to relate purity and holiness to Israel's task of exercising hospitality, building the house and becoming the people that can live with the great king on his estate and in his palace. God is king, the earth is his property, and its people his creatures and servants, who owe their whole being to him. This is the atonement model that relates to the doctrine of creation, but which Schmidt believes has been missing from modern theology.⁸² God owns us, and we are his property. We have been too long on our own out on the far fringes of the estate, and need to come out of the field and into the house to be refreshed, served and restored. That God is not only king but owner is presupposed everywhere in the scriptures. Maccoby, Feldman and Milgrom discuss the achievement of purity only in terms of the insiders, as only Jewish scholars may. They therefore rely on models of the uncontested sovereignty of God – as king, shepherd and father who gives order, shelter, support and nourishment. They do not deal, as Christian theology must, with how the outsider can be made an insider, so give no account of the cost of this event, or of the violence of the defeat of the powers from whom the gentiles must be redeemed. Their account is therefore different from that of Janowski and Stuhlmacher (3.7.2), as it is from Levenson's account of the violence involved in defending God's rule over rebellious forces that challenge his sovereignty over his creation.

Philip Jenson argues that 'Israel existed in the midst of the nations, and some of the laws imply that Israel had a distinctive identity in relation to them. Various laws

⁸¹ Maccoby *Ritual and Morality* 206. Maccoby believes that the purity teaching is about the cycle of *birth and death*, not merely death, as Feldman and Milgrom argue, but he is less successful than either at making death or life theological categories that relate to God's character and intention for Israel. Maccoby belongs at the idealist pole of Feldmann's schema, with none of the link to the doctrine of creation seen by Levenson.

⁸² See footnote 43. It is also the conceptuality of possession, sketched in Chapter 1, and of participation, sketched in Chapter 2.

reflect this awareness of a distinction between Israel and the nations.⁸³ It is possible to extend the parallel to include a correspondence between the three classes of the animal world (sacrificial, clean and unclean animals), and the three divisions of the human world (priests, Israelites and gentiles). This is evidenced by the alignment between sacrificial animals and the priestly class. In the two lists of blemishes those which disqualify a priest from entering a sanctuary to offer sacrifice (Lev 21.17-21) are very similar to the defects which bar a sacrificial animal from being slaughtered (Lev 22.17-25).⁸⁴

Mary Douglas puts a strong version of an assumption shared by all commentators. 'The nature of the living God is in opposition to dead bodies. Total incompatibility holds between God's presence and bodily corruption. God is living, life is his. Other gods belong to death, contagion and decay.'⁸⁵ Milgrom minimises magic and argued that all Israel's effort is now dedicated only to showing that Israel precisely does not do, but rather subverts, what the pagans do. A history-of-religion background and greater interest in the mechanics of the semiotics convinces Mary Douglas that magic, miracle and rite are useful concepts.⁸⁶ She is not convinced that Israel has made herself quite free from pagan rites or belief in demons or occult forces and sees no point in crediting Israel with unique sophistication here. Milgrom is concerned to show that, though the process is not complete, by a successful employment of the semiotics Israel has already gone a considerable way in removing herself from what the gentiles do. The animals which may be offered as gifts represent those behaviours that have a place before God. Those behaviours and animals forbidden have no access to God and may not be brought into the temple.⁸⁷

Douglas demonstrates that the organisation of the Temple, its servers and the place of the tribes around it achieve a cosmic harmony, and that the same is true of the literary composition of Leviticus and Numbers. In scripture and the temple we are dealing with a single artistry in two media. The structure of the biblical books repeats the

⁸³ Jenson *Graded Holiness* 145. Further discussion is provided by Walter Houston *Purity and Monotheism: Clean and unclean animals in Biblical Law* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1993 and M. Haran *Temples and Temple Services in Ancient Israel: an inquiry into the character of cult phenomena and the historical setting of the priestly school* Oxford: Clarendon 1978. Of these only Douglas' work seems to allow that Israel's cultic performance may include parody and deconstruction of the nations.

⁸⁴ Jenson *Graded Holiness* 146.

⁸⁵ Douglas *In the Wilderness* 24.

⁸⁶ Douglas *In the Wilderness* 34, 165-6. The following two issues are related: the Scriptures are unfinished because never quite self-consistent (there is always an evolution of thought discernible) and the fact that concerns Milgrom (but not Douglas) that Israel seems never to be quite rid of pagan influences.

⁸⁷ Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* 225 'The noble domestic animals to whom the covenant is extended stand opposite the zoo of animal kinds not to be eaten or touched'. See also David Bryan *Cosmos, Chaos and the Kosher Mentality* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1995.

structure of the sacrifices and rites.⁸⁸ Sacrifice is therefore not primarily about killing, but about the selection of one body from the many and re-arrangement of it as analogy of the relationships Israel is in. Israel is engaged in the process of re-building and maintaining this microcosm of her relationship with God, constantly arranging and grooming itself back into its place within this relationship.⁸⁹ Processing within the temple is one mode, hearing the scroll read is another, seeing the tripartite construction of the meat on the sacrificial fire is another. The chapters about physical impurity present the body in a series of covers: first the fat covers the organs, then the skin; over the body comes a garment; and over the Israelite comes the roof of the tabernacle, and over the whole lot is the covenant.⁹⁰ Atonement means being covered and sheltered. We can also understand this as God weaving together the fabric of Israel when it gets torn, and unweaving the fabric that the gentiles have prematurely woven together, separating what they have confused. Adam is given animal skins so he is no longer exposed and vulnerable; the ark of the covenant (Exodus 30.6) prevents the Land from becoming barren or exposed; the high priest's garment represents the heavenly bodies, Israel's history and the glory of God, all of which cover and protect the people of Israel. Reading and writing, and the resulting scripture too, are simply idioms of weaving and processing - their logic is expressivist, not causal.⁹¹

Each of these scholars argues that the temple made the people holy. I have expanded on this argument to claim that the temple inducts and educates the elect people into a new action and economy. This paideutic meta-narrative does not appear to be familiar to biblical scholarship, which has therefore explained Israel's action in terms of rationalities that are taxonomic or economic, serving purpose unrelated to Israel's witness to her God. Theological reason is composed of just such rationales as these, so in some sense at least, sociological and functionalist description does not threaten theological description. Nonetheless theology has its own work to do from this wide range of Old Testament sciences to reveal a gospel.

⁸⁸ See Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* 195, 218

⁸⁹ See Douglas *In the Wilderness* 83-101

⁹⁰ See Douglas *Leviticus as Literature* 244.

⁹¹ See 2.7

4.4 Israel's diaspora being.

Israel as God's place for the world.

The liturgy and service of the temple makes holy the elect people. This work includes the teaching and scripture necessitated by exile, by which those away from the holy city nevertheless participate in its work. Temple and synagogue are one in a single work of scripture and oral Torah in which Israel witnesses to her God's lordship over the gods of the nations. The loss of Israel's land to the gentiles and destruction of the temple does not mean that this liturgical service is halted. Rather it leads to an entire reliance, rather than as before merely partial reliance, on the medium of synagogue and scripture.⁹²

Centralised animal sacrifice ceases, but the cult continues where it had originated, at home where Israel meets, eats and teaches.⁹³ Israelites are properly understood as pure, so that what extends from a person, and what one is and does and has, manifests that purity.⁹⁴ Central to sacrifice is the identity of the host and of the guests who bear him gifts. The gifts supply their introduction to the great king. Members of Israel host each other, and are to exercise a more expansive hospitality to outsiders that extends to the whole world. The gifts borne by members of Israel are first one another, and then all other creatures of the world that is the royal estate. Giving meals is the form in which a member of Israel makes the other his guest and member of his household, itself part of the household of the great King. God's action in circumcision and baptism re-determines the world: it transforms it from being contested territory to being entirely his own creature and estate, the medium in which his people may be undividedly with him. We now have to relate the medium established in circumcision and baptism to what is visible to this world, and thus to the related themes of vision and apocalyptic.

4.4.1 Circumcision.

I suggested that we interpret the holiness-purity code in terms of the seed and line of Israel. We must now attempt to link this strong thesis about the biological idiom of the reproduction of Israel to the meeting of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ and in the event of the defeat of all other forces. From the cross and right hand of the Father, Jesus issues the blood and seed of Israel. This pneumatology is a teaching about

⁹² For which see Donald D. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts: The Place of Synagogues in the Second Temple Period* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 1999 and James T. Burtchaell *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and offices in the earliest Christian communities* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992

⁹³ According to Berakhot 55a. 'Now a man's table atones for him', quoted by Neusner 'Judaism after the destruction of the temple', 670.

⁹⁴ See Bruce D. Chilton *Pure Kingdom: Jesus' Vision of God* London SPCK 1996, 123, 125.

the new mediation of creation. The Spirit baptises and immerses the world in a holy fluid environment which only the elect community can breathe. Their breathing and speaking will create a creature able to live in this medium with them. How far has Christian biblical studies employed this theme?

Daniel Boyarin argues that rabbinic Judaism opposes Christian insistence on transforming bodily Judaism into an affair of the spirit. Circumcision is the idiom of sacrifice that forms the body of Israel. The cutting is visible because the community watches, and because it has a physical effect. Bruce Longenecker believes Paul distinguishes outward physical circumcision and inward circumcision of the heart, so we have on one hand the ethnic symbol, and on the other, inner piety.⁹⁵ Boyarin objects to this distinction. This physical mark is a sign copyright to Israel: this cut on the skin means Jewish and makes Jewish. Judaism is a set of physical practices, so to look underneath the skin is illegitimate: there are no changes or mechanism there. Boyarin argues that Paul's claim to discern a 'spiritual' Israel with an inward circumcision is meaningless.⁹⁶

A greater interest in the cosmology of Israel presupposed by the purity teaching of the Pentateuch would allow us to understand that for Paul and his contemporaries, circumcision was a medical operation on the vessels between 'heart' and sex organs. The ancient world supposed that the various forms of behaviour came from the various organs of the body, and amongst these, whether in leading or subordinate position, were the sex organs.⁹⁷ The seed of Israel came out of the 'heart', the organ from which the *pneuma* overflows, and overflowed into the sex organs to determine the character of the child. The ancient world did not believe the design of the body was complete at conception, but that the body needed continual intervention through the earliest years of life. It held that a medical-and-moral regime was necessary to turn the wild body born into the crafted body of a son and heir.⁹⁸ This would make circumcision more like a foreseeable adjustment of, or supplement to, the capacities of the body. Circumcisions close the channels to organs that produce only animal-gentile behaviour and open the

⁹⁵ See Bruce Longenecker *Eschatology and the Covenant: A Comparison of 4 Ezra and Romans 1-11* Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press 1991, 193, and Dunn *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* 454-55.

⁹⁶ See Daniel Boyarin *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* Berkeley: University of California Press 1994, 93-4.

⁹⁷ Aline Rousselle *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* Oxford: Blackwell 1988, 13-20 discusses ancient physiology.

⁹⁸ The case is easy to make for the Greek world, more difficult for Judaea. The cosmology of Israel, everywhere presupposed in the Old Testament and nowhere explicit, is only fragmentarily being brought to the surface by Douglas and the comparative history of religions scholarship of Israel's ancient Near Eastern neighbours.

channels to spiritual behaviour of the *Pneuma* of Israel. The only distinction made by Paul and his world was between those circumcisions that succeed at this difficult hormonal switch-work and those that do not. Paul would therefore be contrasting the familiar circumcision by the community, which starts as a nick on the skin, the effect of which is intended to work upwards to alter the connections with a new circumcision which enters the lungs, as *pneuma*, and fills all the organs of the body at once. Its first evidence is a new form of behaviour rather than an alteration to the skin. The secret of circumcision must then be found outside the body, in the environment from which it breathes, an environment altered by the resurrection of Jesus. Circumcision must be related to the baptism which brings the character of God in suffering and bearing the world to the diaspora condition of Israel. Baptism makes circumcision the condition of the whole world and so re-determines the continuum of Israel's action.

The ancient world had no Cartesian dichotomy of physical and mental. It assumed that both the body, and the continuum in which it moved, were full of components and forces, and that there was no strong distinction between the two. The physical and mental elements were pumped round in one circulation that constituted the whole cosmos.⁹⁹ In this single economy the *Logos spermatikos*, the resurrected body of Jesus, available to us as the transforming meta-biology of his holy Spirit, makes our life-environment new.¹⁰⁰ Though the Old Man did not foresee it, the New Man becomes through the Spirit-assisted normal processes, the rightful heir of the Old Man. It only takes the (spiritual) joining of the New Man with the Old Man to make all the old stock produce new men. The consumption of animals that belong to other powers was understood to make us open to possession by those powers, which could then determine the thought and behaviour available to us.¹⁰¹ This possibility is excluded by Israel's circumcision. This is not just a circumcision of the people of Israel, but by the event of the cross, a baptism of the world-environment, by which the whole environment is circumcised to the gentiles. Baptism is the circumcision of the environment. It involves God's action as Spirit and breath, as spore and power, transforming the old body into the new, meta-biological, creature.

⁹⁹ See the Stoic pneumatology in 5.7.

¹⁰⁰ See 3.2.2 and 4.2.7

¹⁰¹ See Dale B. Martin *The Corinthian Body* New Haven: Yale University Press 1995, 176-78 and 209 on 'the logic of invasion'.

4.5.1 The vision theme in New Testament exegesis.

We must briefly link this spiritual metabolism of the cult to the issues of vision and perception. What I have said under the rubric of reproduction about seed and blood must also be said in terms of fire, light, sight and knowledge where a similar logic holds good. The whole creaturely economy created by baptism serves to produce a single obedient creature. The Temple issues knowledge of itself, not only in the form of images (*eidola*, appearances, models) of itself but also as the faculty of vision itself.

We find in the bible some of the discussion of light, sight, fire and heat that the ancient world understood as a single moral and physical continuum. This continuum accounted for certain sorts of behaviour and prevented certain others. NT studies, though, seems to identify the occasional appearance of this continuum in terms of a modern understanding of light, and so as individual exegetical problems. The saying of Matthew, that *the eye is the lamp of the body* is an example.¹⁰² The eye allows light in. It also, like a valve, keeps it in so it adds to the heat in your body. It is this heat that also allows your body to function as a lamp, giving light and sight out again by which others can see and discern, and see who you are. Weak eyes fail to keep your proper spirit and fire in, allowing what fire there is inside to leak away so it is at risk of being taken over by a stronger alien spirit. So your eyes are bad if they have no light to show, because the fire in you is not strong enough to generate any light.¹⁰³ We are the functions of the thermodynamic at work in us – though of course it is not in us, it is us. This thermodynamic metaphysic, that relates to the Greek conceptuality of *thumos*, appears in the New Testament as the phenomenon of *doxa*, presence, glory or light.

Does this help us with 2 Corinthians 3.18, ‘and we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory’? NT Wright believes that ‘the mirror in which Christians see the glory of the lord.. is one another...when they come face to face with one another they are beholding as in a mirror the glory itself.’¹⁰⁴ Light shines on a mirror and is reflected off. These faces reflect light from Christ and like multiple in-turned mirrors keep it reflecting back and forth between them. That much is true, but there is more, for which

¹⁰² Matthew 6.23, for discussion of which see Dale C. Allison ‘The Eye is the Lamp of the Body’ *New Testament Studies* 33 1987, 61-83.

¹⁰³ In the ancient world, light was understood not only to enter eyes but also to *issue from* them, or as simulacra that issue from the whole body, so what we receive is not a single stuff that we can always call light, but the self-presencing of each object in that economy. According to Padel *In and Out the Mind* 42 the ancients understood that ‘Something *comes into* the eye’, 61 ‘Eyes...are involved in two-way traffic.’ See also Park R. *The Fire in the Eye: Greek Images of the Tragic Self* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992, 39-43, and Martin *The Corinthian Body* 24.

¹⁰⁴ N.T. Wright ‘Reflected Glory: 2 Corinthians 3’ in *The Climax of the Covenant* 181 translating *katoptrizomenoi*.

the concept of reflection is not adequate. Like the good eye, they receive light, and hold it, as a good stove holds its heat. It is then also able to act like a lamp and send that light out again. Light makes fire makes more light, with the result that there is more light at the end than at the beginning. 'Reflect' or 'behold as in a mirror' cannot translate this growth in light. The Spirit grows light by making believers not only transmitters but its co-producers.

The Christians are light-generating, as long as they recognise one other as actualisations of the shining of the face of Christ. There is no strong distinction to be made here between the face, the light it radiates or the image it casts. Christ is the face that shines its own light with such brightness that it not only reflects off other faces but it heats their fire, making it not their fire but his, so it is not merely their exteriors that shine Christ's light, but their interiors that host his fire. More than that, it is not only the light of Christ's face that reflects off other faces, it is Christ's face that shines through and re-figures these faces, creating a family resemblance. Prolonged exposure to him makes you look and act more like Christ. Not all fire is the same: the fire you generate is as personal to you as your voice. There is both a hierarchy of fire and there is the issue of how benign any particular source of fire is.¹⁰⁵ The first point is that there is no strictly zero-sum economy of light, so the issue is one of spreading this fire by tending it and being custodians and householders of it. The second is that light, fire and glory are the possession and function of persons, and function as concepts for the formation of persons.

Richard Hays also discusses 2 Corinthians 3. First there was the old covenant, and then there was the new covenant. The new covenant is much brighter than the old. But what is cause and what effect here?¹⁰⁶ 'The old-covenant glory did not just peter out like a battery-powered flashlight; rather it was done away by the greater glory of the new covenant in Christ.'¹⁰⁷ The old did not end, it was just rendered redundant: it is the comparison with the new that brings it to an end, no failing of its own. Was there no use for it any more and so in this sense the one covenant was done away with by the greater glory of the other? Perhaps Hays's analogy can be improved upon. Here are two other

¹⁰⁵ A person of dignity would not condescend to take fire from a more humble hearth to re-light his own. Foreign fire is what Nadab and Ahibu offer in Leviticus 10.1.

¹⁰⁶ Richard B. Hays *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* New Haven: Yale University Press 1989, 135 offers this paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 3.7 'But if the ministry of death chiselled in stone script, came with such glory that the sons of Israel were not able to gaze upon the face of Moses because of the glory of his face (a glory now nullified in Christ), how much more will the ministry of the Spirit come with glory.' As Moses was eclipsed by the intimation of Christ, so the sight of the Christ on the cross represent to us the utter unreadability and veiledness of the intentions of God.

¹⁰⁷ Hays *Echoes of Scripture* 135.

options. When the sun comes up, we are no longer reliant on the oil lamp that gave us light all night long: the lamp is not rendered non-functional by the daylight, it does continue to add its tuppence-worth to the light of day, though, since no one is concerned to tend it, it eventually goes out. Another analogy: the glory of the old covenant was the pilot light: when the main burner of the boiler roars into life, it does not extinguish the pilot light, but the pilot light now cannot be distinguished from the rest of the flame. The old covenant cannot be made out from the new. In each case the relationship between the glory of Christ and Moses is not one of either-or, but one which demands a more participative logic. The one is the means of the other.¹⁰⁸ The new covenant is the glory of the old. The old has worked successfully in that it has brought about the new-and-self-renewing covenant: it has created the both the conditions for its success and the occasion of its bursting into appearance. The old covenant worked alone, was faithful to its purpose, and was vindicated, it has borne fruit, and no longer bears the burden alone. Wright assumed reflection in a zero-sum economy of light; Hays assumed that because the new is bigger and better than the old, the old is shamed rather than vindicated by this. The saying about the eye in Matthew and the discussion of glory in 2 Corinthians relate to a single cosmology in which fire, light and vision all function equally as action, reception and means of both. Why are these exegetes attempting to understand them in terms of reception alone? Does this misreading of Israel's cosmology result from the assumption that what is new can only serve to displace what is old? Could such a logic be the result of residual supersessionism? Is it not the inevitable result of modern New Testament studies, that is of a New Testament studies determined to establish its identity in independence of the conversation with other theological disciplines?¹⁰⁹

4.5.2 Apocalyptic.

Fire, light and vision belong with the issue of what is visible in the temple. A remark from Christopher Rowland illustrates how the issue of vision arises in discussion of the temple. 'When Paul sees the risen Lord, we may describe it as a vision of a heavenly being, but within the thought-world of Paul's day that meant the drawing-back of the veil to disclose that other dimension of reality which was normally hidden'.¹¹⁰ Apocalypticism

¹⁰⁸ In the second case the pilot light enables the main flame. In the first case the oil burned by the oil lamp is the function of last season's sunlight converted into oil by an olive tree. See 5.1 and 6.2

¹⁰⁹ See 4.1

¹¹⁰ Rowland C. *The Open Heaven A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* SPCK 1982, 378 'Thus when Paul sees the risen Lord, we may describe it as a vision of a heavenly being, but within the thought-world of Paul's day that meant the drawing-back of the veil to disclose that other dimension of reality

requires an ontology which does not simply oppose presence and absence, but uses biological description and an account of the development of an educated audience to determine the modalities of God's action.¹¹¹ It is rather the case that in a non-modern cosmology vision is the function not of the one doing the looking, but of the one looked at, who must release vision of himself before anyone may see him. Vision is not a matter only of the reception of light, but of the giving of light as the giving of authority. You can only see the lord when you are in his court and thus in his favour.

Fire and light belong together to the ancient world's metaphysic of becoming. They are the idiom in which things come to be and pass away again.¹¹² The total processes of nature, that come-into-being and pass-out-of-being again, were regarded by the ancient world, and conceptualised most conveniently for us by the Stoics, as fire and as spirit.¹¹³ Fire, heat and light are not simply about vision and knowledge, but constitute the whole medium of the natural and moral world. In Israel the temple sacrifices drove the single economy of people, the land and its products, producing the cloud of the

which was normally hidden.' 318 'Entry into the garden was...the exposition of the Scriptures...There was great responsibility resting upon the student of the Scriptures.. it was a potentially dangerous exercise which could have dire consequences for the unwary.' Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery* 117 'Much as in an apocalyptic, even the visionary revelation of 'mysteries' does not come 'out of the blue', but is mediated by a meditative exegesis of Scripture passages - be it Genesis 1, Ezekiel 1 or Isaiah 6.' 122 'The exposition of the *merkabah* (Ezekiel 1) was explicitly permitted only to mature and experienced rabbis working in camera; similar restrictions applied to other passages.'

¹¹¹ For accounts of biblical apocalyptic see for example John J. Collins *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Interpretation of the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* New York: Crossroad 1984, Haywood 'Sacrifice and World Order' in Sykes *Sacrifice and Redemption* and Margaret Barker 'Beyond the Veil of the Temple: The High Priestly Origins of the Apocalypses' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51, 1998.

¹¹² 'Fire' is what the cosmos most essentially is. Though this fire remains fire it also devolves into other elements. Fire gives birth successively to air, to water and to earth, but does so without ceasing to be fire: everything comes out of fire and passes back into it again. So we have:

Fire

Fire-air

Fire-air-water

Fire-air-water-earth (Fire), or

A

A (A – A¹)

A (A¹ – A²)

A (A¹ – A² – A³) → A

The lower spheres of the cosmos represent either the presence of the furthest of these from pure fire itself, or the presence of these elements in increasing degrees of mixture. The cosmos simply occasionally returns to being what it most essentially is, as though it periodically cleans itself up. Fire seeks to return upward towards its origin: even mixtures of the other elements that we see in the growth of other entities such as plants seek upwards towards their origin as fire does. All this becoming is what being *does*, without ever ceasing to be immutable. See K.F. Johansen *A History of Ancient Philosophy* London: Routledge 1998, 329, and G.E.R. Lloyd *Polarity and Analogy: Two Types of Argumentation in early Greek Thought* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1966, 236-7.

¹¹³ The issue of whether we can use Stoic thought to discuss Israel's practice arises because, for the sake of academic convenience, we deal only in discrete intellectual systems (Stoic, platonic, neoplatonic), rather than understanding these merely as formal versions of a continuum of folk beliefs and practices and a common sense cosmology of the ancient world. This is not a single cosmology to be sure, but sets of practices and beliefs with family resemblances.

Shekinah that functioned as their common medium. This was not an autonomous system that could be described by biology alone, but determined by the God of Israel who moves his people on to holiness, a project in which all the processes of biology must play their part and by which they would also be redeemed. Fire, heat and light equally represent the moral component of this continuum. Being in someone's view allows you to see (only) what he sees, and seeing something amounts to admitting it and giving it approval. There is no light as such, but only the light and vision exercised by some authority, and the set of objects admissible to it. Seeing is the function of respect-paying to some authority by which you are granted an audience, a vision. An angel or apocalyptic appearance in the temple of a figure from Israel's scriptures refers to a characteristic of God or moment of the action of God in Israel's history. With a more developmental conception of light or fire, that understands it as act of giving and receiving authority and being, New Testament scholarship would be able to link the vision of apocalyptic to the issue of the community that has been taught it and brought up in it that I argued for in Chapter 2.¹¹⁴

4.6 Biblical scholarship on Israel's cultic action.

I have argued that the temple represents Israel's liturgical work of worship of the one God and comprises that complex set of activities that build the people of God's household. The building that stands on Zion, and the image of it displayed in every synagogue, is the house of God to the extent that it contributes to this project. While it is no longer controversial to understand all New Testament theology, Paul's included, as temple theology, there remains the question of how far New Testament scholarship has been able to see the temple as Israel's liturgical labour and performance, before the world, of her office as her Lord's under-labourer.

In Chapter 2 I introduced the conceptuality of participation as resources for discussion of *paideia* and eschatology. In this chapter I have asked whether the scholarship of biblical exegesis, theology and (political) philosophy employs such a logic of participation, that would allow it to talk about incorporation and transformation, and so to follow the claim of Israel's eschatological political cosmology. I have asked whether biblical studies has found the means to account for transformation. Can it represent

¹¹⁴ Bockmuehl *Revelation and Mystery* 113 'If therefore the exposition of Torah constitutes an event of revelation, it may not come as a great surprise that the rabbis even employ language reminiscent of the fiery Sinai theophany in describing the study of Scripture.' This allows us to say that that scripture is closed to gentile eyes, not for their punishment only, but also for their protection.

Israel's claim to be the mediator of the transformation of the material-biological world from autonomy to creaturehood? We have asked whether the literature that discusses Israel's temple cult is willing to understand it as theological and liturgical work that opens a new and wider modality of action. I have tried to show that this literature has not yet adequately engaged with the themes of sacrifice, of sacrificial fire and light, or with the conceptuality of clothing, covering and tabernacle that I related to atonement. It makes too little of the conceptuality of baptism and circumcision that should be related to the eschatological re-determination of the environment, and too little of the writing, binding and weaving that, for Israel, conceptualise the growth and thickening out of relationship. Accounting for the becoming of this holy people requires a thermodynamic metaphysic able to relate light, heat and seeing to growing and coming into appearance. A concept of elective biology is required to demonstrate that sons are born to Israel in the mixed media of biology and adoption, in which the material processes of the earth are taken up by the Spirit. Can biblical scholarship avoid setting spirit in opposition to body, or biology to moral and meaningful action?¹¹⁵ Must it rely on a dichotomy of biology and culture made problematic by a univocal modern concept of presence and representation, being and its reflection? I have suggested that modern biblical exegesis lacks the conceptuality of performance that I sketched in Chapter 2 and which I will relate to the public practices of *paideia* represented by non-modern political philosophy in Chapter 6. I have suggested that it makes Israel's ritual, liturgy, sacrifice and temple problematic for this reason. I have asked whether biblical exegesis gives adequate account of the responsibility of scripture to the community it forms, and of the (asymmetrically) co-constitutive relationship of scripture and that community. Can it concede that scripture instructs and forms the people of God?

It may be countered that it is not the task of biblical or New Testament studies to discuss the meaningfulness of their subject matter outside the text, but that this is rather the job of systematic theology or hermeneutics. It is the task of systematic theology, in conversation with the other disciplines of the university representing the various claims of the economy of modernity, to discuss the meaningfulness of these biblical texts and so there to perform the evangelical task of hearing and, under God, to repeat God's word to our own society. This brings us to the issue of which models and metaphors to adopt to this purpose. I have suggested that this hermeneutical task must be continually re-subordinated to the doctrine of God who is for us. The question of the status of biblical

¹¹⁵ Funkenstein in 5.7 asks why Christianity has not made more use of the stoic metaphysic which does not create this dichotomy.

language – its models and metaphors – is not to be settled by a distinct discipline of hermeneutics to which the political and theological nature of biblical statement can be referred. It is intrinsic to the theological task of making the doctrine of God obediently evangelical. This can be done only by the more convincing performance of theology, including what might be called typological interpretation that belongs to a logic and ontology of participation. The question is not which metaphors we should adopt in talking about the person and work of God. Rather it is the task of theology to commandeer every modern concept in turn and bring it under the discipline of scripture and the doctrine of the church. Thereby we may see that the action of God in Israel is the mediation whereby, through baptism, even we moderns may be made properly present to each other. Israel, in the person of Jesus Christ, is our lesson, teacher and supervisor. So I have come to the uncontroversial conclusion that there must be more, and more robust, interaction between biblical studies, and political and systematic theology. There must be a biblical theology.

Chapters 3 and 4 have argued that Jesus makes a better performance of the world than does the world. It puts in a fallen and failing performance, he a perfecting and enduring performance. He does this world-performance necessarily in the face of the world and against the world. He does it on the cross. He is God and man. He is man. We are not yet man. Man is the creature, servant and friend of God. We are not yet this. Jesus can do us better than we can do ourselves. We cannot do anything that Jesus cannot repeat and do better. He can take away our claim to have done something new and unrepeatable that would put us decisively beyond God and make us autonomous. He can put in a performance of greater virtuosity that shows that all our doing is just a failure of his doing. He mimics and portrays us, both in our present truculence and misery, and in the glory that we will receive from him. On the cross he plays us as we are, and as we will be, with him. These chapters have offered an account of atonement that does not rest on a choice between models that requires a resultant separate work of hermeneutics and epistemology, with further separate discussion of the appropriateness of such models for today, and thus of the issue of time and modernity.¹¹⁶ Rather I have attempted to provide a theology of time in which time is what God provides for us. God ushers us into his time. He brings his servant-community up into the skill of receiving

¹¹⁶ The contributors in John Goldingay *Atonement Today* London SPCK 1995 and John T. Carroll & Joel B. Green *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity* Peabody: Hendrickson 1995 intend to give an account of the atonement, and then a separate account of the atonement for us today.

time and giving his time. His time describes and contains the time of modernity. These chapters have prepared us for Chapter 6 in which our claim to be the knower and measurer, because the actor and creator of our world, is dethroned.

Chapter 5

Mediation and history

This discussion of being and becoming has indicated the centrality of mediation. The modern West tells the story of a loss of mediation and loss of anything outside the all-present being of the economy of modernity. It tells this story as though man had succeeded in creating his autonomy.¹ The Church may tell such a story of collapse and loss only as one moment in its larger confession of the economy of God. A story of a fall can be told only as warning, and as witness to God who overcomes this fall and creates a proper freedom for his creature.

5.1 Paideia.

I will now lay out two contrasting versions of history and economies of time. One of these is broadly the history the West tells of itself, a history of secularisation and growing autonomy from God. The other is a salvation history in which, despite itself, modernity also has its part. This is of course not new. What I call the economies of time are the two cities described by Augustine which I shall discuss in the final chapter.

To situate the discussion of the loss of mediation I must set out its context, and do so by presenting this context as an ethic. The object of all human doing is the formation of a people. Theology is the claim that participation in the talk of Father and Son is the end and guarantee of all public discourse. As commentary on what is said, theology, and in conversation with it, philosophy, is therapy and discipline to this end.²

¹ See 3.6.2.

² See Pierre Hadot *Philosophy as a Way of Life* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1995, and Martha C. Nussbaum *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1994, who make the case that philosophy is therapy intended to serve formation, though these two authors understand this formation in individual rather than corporate terms. Political philosophy represented by Quentin Skinner *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1978 is notionally at least about positive freedom and the formation of sociality through concerted public action and by means of state-building, that itself forms a public character (*sensus communis*). Moral philosophy, on the other hand, represented for example by Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998, describes a negative (formal) freedom, that understands that the wise man must retire from the fray of public life and action to theory and contemplation. Ian Hunter *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001, argues for ethical philosophy as service to political philosophy.

Such a philosophy, in conversation with theology will relate to the world, and thus to the discourse of science. It will relate to the law, as a set of propositions about what that life could be, and is a set of skills by which to regulate talk about that life in order to move towards it. This leadership does this by creating law to educate this people. This leadership, which we could also call the state, must be held to this paideutic task, and criticised, in particular, when it does not give a lead. This leadership of the project of the formation of a people is the proper object of law. It is the task of critical philosophy to respond to law, and to articulate for the law the problems arising in the course of this project. Philosophy and criticism must understand themselves to be in dialogue with law and on law, and to remind the state that it is to teach and to lead by encouraging certain discourse and limiting others.³ Reason and enlightenment are about the ongoing task of leading that project and judging that leadership.⁴ Philosophy, which we can also call criticism, must understand itself to be in dialogue with law to remind the state that its mandate is to teach, lead and enable. The university is then the place in which professors of law – philosophers – dispute about ends and means – ethics-and-law-making – in order to refine their own performance as trainers of leaders and legislators. The Church is at different moments participant in, leader and critic of this project.⁵ Legislators are commentators on public speech who indicate the bounds and direction of good speech by modelling good action and ruling out whatever action does not contribute to it. The end of the law is not to rule a vast number of actions out, but to bring about a large number of competencies: it is speech-therapy designed to bring the whole people into speech.

Most cases of speech can be handled on the floor of the market. The cases the market cannot handle it passes up to law. Law passes the hardest cases up again to philosophy. But what happens if philosophy does not refer its conclusions back to the speech of the lawcourt, and back again to the whole speech of the market of public

³ In *The Contest of the Faculties* Kant abolished any sense that philosophy is subordinate to law, or that law is to be understood as the education of a people and enlargement of its imagination. He detached philosophy from any responsibility other than to itself.

⁴ Robert R. Williams *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* Berkeley: University of California Press 1997, 21 finds that 'Recognition names not only a structure of intersubjectivity but also a teleological process in which freedom is progressively mediated and realised. This process proceeds in the direction of an increasing recognition of freedom and an increasing realisation of freedom. The state is supposed to complete this process of freedom and recognition as its telos.' Michael N. Forster, *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1998, 294 believes that we must judge paideia, which he calls 'law and purpose historicism' as 'philosophically indefensible, merely one of the more seductive and persistent of the many philosophical damp squibs developed during this period... (n10) 'the perpetuation in a modified guise of recently discredited Christian theological dogmas'.

⁵ On the question of whether the state is part of the Church's responsibility see Oliver O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 193-242 and Reinhard Hütter *Suffering Divine Things* 166-8.

discourse?⁶ In the belief that there was no control on talk about the world, Socrates gave up talk about the world to concentrate on the education of legislators.⁷ In giving up the world he gave up the vocabulary and medium in which all action takes place. He took the world away from the *polis*, with the result that explanation becomes a referring everything back to an ideal earlier state before the first event. In the same way Kant brought to an end the subordination of philosophy to law. Law was no longer understood as the education of a people.⁸ As a result philosophy understood only that it is to rule on thought, never on public action. It became an all-forbidding law for which the only reason is pure reason.⁹ Philosophy must service the speech of the community that employs it, but the philosophy that disdains to attend to the speech and hopes of any community cannot do this.

Modernity identifies religion as separate from ethics, the discussion of ends. It supposes that we all know what end has been agreed upon, and have now only to concern ourselves with weighing the options for getting there. The modern concept of religion belongs to this idea that there is one single end and all talk is only about how. Theology should refuse this definition and identify religion as talk about ends, assume open discourse about what the ends are, and insist that there is no meta-discourse that can settle this for us. Then we can say that religion is a matter of the good performance of talk about ends. It is not to be reduced to reaching agreement so the talk can stop, but at getting better at the give-and-take of converse, so the talk can grow, become a good of

⁶ In 6.3 I will suggest that it is intrinsic to possession of power that the powerful are not aware of what they are doing and are as likely as anyone to protest their powerlessness.

⁷ Schneewind *The Invention of Autonomy* 534. According to Xenophon 'Socrates broke with his predecessors by attending to a new set of issues. He did not dispute as they did, about the cosmos and the nature of things in general. He asked instead about human affairs.'

⁸ Hochstrasser T. J. *Natural Law Theories in the Early Enlightenment* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, 196-7 In *The Contest of the Faculties* Kant 'suggests that nothing but confusion and argument would result from trying to deduce normative principles from empirical materials (ie intellect from the realm of sensations). For Kant the jurist's approach will inevitably be that of trying to deduce general principles from the law of the land, whereas properly it was the role of philosophy to identify the background *a priori* principles of moral philosophy. While the state required the lawyers to make the current law codes their proper object of study, philosophy should be freed from such restrictions. Philosophy served the cause of truth, whereas the other three faculties existed to serve the utility of the government.' Gillian Rose *Dialectic of Nihilism Post-Structuralism and Law* Oxford: Blackwell 1984, 11-24 describes 'Reason' as a tyrant that refuses the possibility of there being anything other than itself to which it has to be responsible. I have argued that reason (which in Chapter 2 I referred to as commentary or articulation) is agreed upon by the parties as a subsidiary work to the work of improving their performance.

⁹ Charles Taylor 'What is wrong with Foundationalism?' in Mark Wrathall & Jeff Malpas eds. *Heidegger, Coping and Cognitive Science Essays in honour of Hubert L. Dreyfus* Volume 2 Cambridge: MIT Press 2000, 133 argues that Kant formalised the strong form-content distinction made by contract theory, for which what matters is not the good society, but just meeting the procedural requirements of consent. All ethical discussion is in the idiom of the will, without reference to positive content, making it a matter of form, not content, unhooking right from any substantive good.

its own and open space for other goods to emerge.¹⁰ Our talk is then both preparation for and already good performance of life in common.¹¹

Religion, or practical philosophy, is the science and skill of talking about ends, as a means to developing the ability to tell the difference between ends. It must always refer itself to the world, and receive comment back from it, so religion and world are in a single conversation, in which each passes judgement on the performance of the other. Our academic talk therefore must understand itself as a commentary on the whole economy of bodiliness that constitutes the world. It should concern itself not only with the formation of the intellective soul, but also with the speaking to and hearing of many, and enabling of many in hearing and speaking. Religion means the development of the skills of good practice.¹²

5.1.2 Historical criticism and the modern state.

A quite different definition of religion was proposed by Hobbes and Spinoza. Religion is the opposite of secular. Secularity is the term for the determination of an elite to make the state the sphere of their autonomy. The state would then not be the project of the formation of plural acting-and-enabling but a closed economy and property of a clique. This re-definition of religion created a sphere of tight control over public discourse with the intention of extinguishing disunity and disagreement and bringing about acquiescence

¹⁰ O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 281 'Modern society has striven to totalise speech.' 283 'The communities of discourse do not interact to construct a catholic vision of the common good. They conglobulate into would-be philosophies which are both sectarian in outlook and totalitarian in pretension. The term 'ideology' best expresses this meltdown of the democratic idea, an implosion of critical speech upon itself in which the very act of speaking is crushed beneath the ambitions speech is made to serve. Self-posed speech destroys its own point and collapses into silence.'

¹¹ Until the eighteenth century the concept of rhetoric dealt with all the issues of performance. Public speech was not reckoned to be easy, so it was taught and learned. Schneewind 'The Divine Corporation and the history of ethics' in Richard Rorty, J.B. Schneewind & Quentin Skinner *Philosophy in History: Essays on the Historiography of Philosophy* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1984, does not relate the good to freedom and or to a sense of the development and growing up into freedom and maturity of the agents within the 'Divine Corporation', nor define goodness further as goodness for a range of specific ends which require choices. Frederick C. Beiser *The Sovereignty of Reason: The Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1996, does not relate 'reason' to reasoning together, converse, public talk and the skills of the development of public talk. Reason therefore for him never appears as faith doing what it must do to remain faithful – taking instruction, learning to think. Reason for Beiser appears to be precisely *not* tradition, inspiration or Scripture. I have defined reason as what these three do together.

¹² The case for theology as the mode of the truly public life is made in Chapter 6. Hadot *Philosophy as a Way of Life* 32 'Christianity was presented as a *philosophia*, a way of life in conformity with the divine Logos, as the Middle Ages developed, one witnessed a complete a 'total separation' of ancient spiritual exercises, which were no longer considered a part of philosophy but were integrated into Christian spirituality, and philosophy itself, which became a 'simple theoretical tool' at the service of theology, an *ancilla theologiae*.'

and unity under the state.¹³ Within this new sphere, desire and imagination are under the control of authorities who do not refer their authority to the project of public speech and formation, and are not themselves subject to the discipline of public speech.¹⁴

Subordinating the Church to this type of state means subordinating talk about ends to talk about means as they relate to an end that is not only non-negotiable but of which no public expression is allowed, so subordinating all speech to the penalties of the civil power.¹⁵ Such a state rests on the belief that the Church has no regulative or governmental function over groups and public persons, but was to govern only the individual solitarily.¹⁶ It represents the determination to drive together all the *how* questions of the practice of a good life, and to give them technical solutions, which together we call political economy, or politics and economics.

Historical biblical criticism has its origins here. Like the philosophers, the biblical scholars made a claim to autonomy which involved reading the bible without its formative community, the Church, and without the formation of any community as its purpose.¹⁷ The rationale of this type of biblical studies is no longer obvious. A more

¹³ Steven Nadler *Spinoza: A Life* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999, 272 argues that 'Spinoza's ultimate interpretation is to undercut the political power exercised in the Republic by religious authorities.' See John Milbank *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* Oxford: Blackwell 1990, 17-20 for a similar argument. Hunter *Rival Enlightenments* 27 argues that 'By replacing the Aristotelian anthropology of man's rational and social being with an Epicurean conception of man as a passion-driven self-destructive being, and by using a voluntarist theology to exclude theo-rational conceptions of justice from the civil domain, the civil philosophers literally (Hobbes) or in effect (Pufendorf) identified natural law with the commands of the civil sovereign.'

¹⁴ Religion ceased to be public discourse and became instead private discourse and the private sphere. It divided the world into the two spheres of public and private such that even the public sphere was absorbed into the private sphere. The sphere of politics became the private function of a small group, and the leadership that had been the function of the formation in conversation of a whole people, became the property of that group, and government a clerisy and technocracy. See Wannenwetsch 'The political worship of the Church'.

¹⁵ Hunter *Rival Enlightenments* 26 argues that 'rather than restricting religion to the private sphere in order to effect the de-sacralisation of politics, Leibniz, Wolff, and Kant all attempted to receive a secular equivalent for religion - in the form of their own natural theologies - through which they hoped to provide a moral basis for a resacralised state.'

¹⁶ Amos Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986, 17 argues that 'The view of the state as a human artifact through and through rather than as a natural product of a built-in *inclinatio ad societatem*, though it had never before been defended so radically and systematically, replaced pure natural law traditions.'

¹⁷ See Kant *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 6.112-14. Levenson 'The Hebrew Bible, the OT and historical criticism' S. E. Fowl & L. G. Jones *Reading in Communion: Scripture and Ethics in Christian Life* Grand Rapids, Michigan Eerdmans 1991, 47, argues that 'For historical criticism is the form of biblical studies that corresponds to the classical liberal ideal...Like citizens in the classical liberal state, scholars practising historical criticism of the Bible are expected to eliminate or minimise their communal loyalties, so see them as legitimately operative only within associations that are private, non-scholarly and altogether voluntary'. Deconstruction of claims in the bible was a way of deconstructing the political claims of political hierarchies and law. Jonathan I. Israel *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001, 258-74, 447-56 indicates some of the history of the political imperative that drove this early modern secularising biblical hermeneutic. I have tried to indicate the difficulty of discussing Israel's cult for a modern biblical studies that does not allow itself the

constructive approach understands law, philosophy, exegesis and theology to be in conversation with one another. The two tasks of reading the world and of reading the bible both require exegesis, and concepts, and doctrines.¹⁸ In each of these disciplines what is said must be related to the whole history of what has been said, of continuity with the tradition, and of internal and external consistency. It is a matter not only of what the biblical exegetes say they find in the biblical texts, but about what theologians say all previous generations of exegetes have said, and about what philosophers say about the language they both use. If left to their own devices the exegetes would be making a claim to immediacy. But the philosophers and theologians, as long as they understand themselves to be in conversation with the exegetes, together function as the control on exegesis. The biblical exegete uses concepts kept in serviceable order by the philosopher and provided by that keeper of the thesaurus of the tradition, the theologian.¹⁹

The bible is the commentary on and technique of navigation through all the forms of writing and institution-building that make up the world, and their re-direction to the formation of the community of God's witness in the world. Scripture is itself already exegesis. Scripture is exegesis of the world. So scripture is first the subject of exegesis, not first its object. Exegesis of scripture is subsidiary to Scripture's work of reading the world. This work of world-reading is not merely a looking at the world, but bringing various worlds into confrontation. The end is not to look at the world merely to see it without engagement, but to join in conversation with it.

To read the bible is to be equipped with a new means by which the world may make itself visible to us. This biblical apparatus provides the bandwidth that amplifies our attention span so we may perceive the world as sets of regularities, so each creature can be made out in its own segment of time, and thus seen in the wholeness of its life-cycle. It allows us to trace the web that unites act and its vindication and so to see relationships in their completeness and redemption. It picks up the linguisticity of the

conceptual resources for talking about practice, performance, parody and public witness. It does not have those resources because modern exegesis understands itself to be autonomous from doctrine (the tradition of an ecclesial community) and philosophy (public political responsibility).

¹⁸ See Gerard Loughlin 'The Basis and Authority of Doctrine' in Colin E. Gunton ed. *Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997, 42 'Scripture and tradition were transformed into history and experience', and Bayer *Gott als Autor* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1999, 10 'All drei Dimensionen (Geschichte, Philosophie, Poesie) gehören zusammen, dürfen sich nicht von einander isolieren und damit sich selbst absolut setzen.'

¹⁹ Kant *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 118-22 presents a quite different account of this relationship. 'Ecclesiastical Faith has the Pure Faith of Religion for its Supreme Interpreter' 121 'There is, therefore, no norm of ecclesiastical faith except Scripture, and no other expositor of it except the *religion of reason* and *scholarship* (which deals with the historical element of Scripture). And, of these two, the first alone is *authentic* and *valid* for the whole world, whereas the second is merely *doctrinal*.'

world and so understands it not as a thing without speech but as complexes of conversations. It does not merely see it but hears it, is heard by it and interacts with it. It shows us the world as history and therefore as the place for humans, the animal with history and therefore with a future. Inasmuch as biblical studies understands itself to be alone before the text, able to take in everything at once as though it were all at once present like an illustration, it misidentifies the end. It abstracts the time in which the thing is, so it sees only a flat field without event or interactivity.

5.2 Enlightenment as immediacy.

The project of the economy of modernity is to see, and see through the obstacles to seeing. It is a claim to pure knowledge that understands that it must do without practical knowledge, and become purer and clearer by ridding itself of all considerations of the practices and means of knowing. It is the claim to dispense with the whole population of intermediaries, the elect people, that God has appointed to steward and husband us into knowledge. It understands all discussion of the medium of knowing as unnecessary restraint that prevent it gaining an immediate knowledge.²⁰ It has shunted the question of *how* into a number of special domains, variously aesthetics, politics or technical expertise. It tolerates no plurality, crowds, complexity, or range of time-scales, nor the non-linearity and asymmetry of the dual agency of God with man. It is the attempt to do entirely without consideration of performance and to go directly to the object, by dealing only in the conceptuality of immediacy. It promises to free us from the tutelage of another, to provide a cheaper grace that gets to the object faster, doing so at the expense of being able to say what the object is it wants to get us to. It wants to get us there without our being altered or matured by the process.

The enlightened are only enlightened because they sit at the summit of the writhing world. But equally they are unenlightened because they do not know what everyone in the heap beneath them knows, that the world is a thing of conflict, a matter of pushing forward, acquiring leverage, accruing the capital and wherewithal to see purely

²⁰ Garrett Green *Theology, Hermeneutics and Imagination: The Crisis of Interpretation at the End of Modernity* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, 54 argues that Kant characterised 'leading reins' as illegitimate restraint, while Hamann countered that Kant (contradictorily) made immaturity 'self-incurred', blaming the nation for a tutelage forced on it by the self-appointed guardian and exploiter, Frederick. Ingolf U. Dalferth *Gedeutete Gegenwart: Zur Wahrnehmung Gottes in den Erfahrungen der Zeit* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1997, 147 argues that Hegel 'wies darauf hin, daß der scheinbar totale Sieg der Aufklärung ein Pyrrhussieg war, der nur dazu geführt hat, daß der Gegensatz zwischen Theologie und Philosophie in Gestalt der Entgegensetzung von Glauben und Wissen 'nun innerhalb der Philosophie selbst verlegt worden ist'.'

and be enlightened.²¹ There cannot be universal enlightenment because this vision is achieved only by expending the poor: the poor can see what we cannot – chiefly that we are exploiting them. Our view, being incomplete, is false and no enlightenment.²²

Modernity is constituted by the belief that it merely receives what is there without contributing to it.²³ We can command the object of our vision, but cannot be held responsible for it, for it is purely object. Modernity claims that looking is a simple act of reception, and thus of passivity, that has no constitutive impact on us and for which no training is required.²⁴ It claims that knowledge is effortless vision, that everything can equally well be seen through anything, and that there is no requirement to discover a proper implicit order. All knowledge is just a beatific vision of the object. We can see right through to the very object utterly without interference of any intermediaries. But it is not so. Looking is an idiom by which we interact with the world, and impact on it.

I have indicated that there is still a non-Kantian *a posteriori* philosophy of technique that deals with all the issues of how.²⁵ Theology is a form of this practical knowledge. It insists that knowledge is not instantly visible, that the body is more than the eye, that things have to be learned and worked for, and that there is an inevitable and proper toil of translation. I argued in chapter 2 that all our knowledge and world is mediated to us. Everything we see, we see through the skills honed by many generations, and in their generations these people always remain the media of all our seeing. Seeing, and the apparatus of reading and literacy we have built on it, does not represent the

²¹ See Hegel *Phenomenology of Spirit* B.IV.a 194-6 on the different knowledge and consciousnesses of the lord and bondsman.

²² We may say that the Church succeeds in making the best claim to universality and catholicity. It is the real university. It knows what the university does not, that knowledge is inseparable from work and the overcoming of resistance. With the concept of the bondage of the will, the Church knows that knowledge is not all known, is closed and that it is we who prevent it from becoming open.

²³ Robert W. Jenson 'On the Renewing of the Mind' in *Essays on Theology of Culture* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995, 167 argues that 'To knowledge for which sight is the metaphor, the response or solicitation of the other is not *constitutive*. In the final version of Greek reflection, which became the theology of all late antiquity's cults, this ideal of knowledge is paradigmatically and foundationally instantiated in Aristotle's Unmoved Mover under various aliases. This God is a sheer act of vision, wholly agent and not at all sufferer, receiving and expecting nothing from what is seen - if, indeed, it is acknowledged that anything other than itself comes within its purview....The organ of truth, in the classic tradition, is the 'mind's eye', knowledge is *theoria*, *seeing*'. 168 'When the Enlightenment revolted against theology in the name of reason, it thus revolted also against philosophy as anciently practised, since it was theology by which that practice was now carried on. Thus in the Enlightenment's understanding and practice of reason, the countervailing factor [talk and hearing] is gone. Reason becomes what even Aristotle did not make it: sheerly the individual's ability to see the truth.'

²⁴ It also claims to project the time and space in which there may be objects, and so to constitute the object it sees.

²⁵ In Chapters 1 and 2 we related *being* (and thus objects) to affordance. The thing-in-itself is a paradox: if it is a thing it is a tool and a 'for-a-purpose', not a 'for-itself' or 'in-itself'. Thus pure knowledge (pure reason) is not about all that most purely *is*, but about control of, commentary on and correction of practical

whole range of bodiliness, but only one part of that range. It is the result of the remembering of some skills and promoting these to our dominant vocabulary whilst pushing into the background other skills and modes of embodiment.²⁶

The concept of honour allows us to relate being to vision. Any power broker sees us because he allows us to come into his view. He allows us to see what he sees as he sees. All those who pay court to the power broker contribute to making him the man he is. It is only by virtue of our looking up to him that there comes to be an orientation schema of up and down which is second nature to the population brought up within it.²⁷ Our looking and seeing has a history; the history forms a continuum which acts as the medium of our action. Every sort of looking is a certain mode of deliberately seeing some persons and overlooking others, while forgetting that this is what we are doing. All this pure and immediate seeing is refusal of mediation. But it is not at all what it claims. It is not the absence of mediation. It is the mediation of that concept of man whose body-language our society has internalised. In Chapter 6 I will argue that this power broker is the executive arm of the many autonomous domains that constitute the economy of modernity.

Leadership is the ability to describe what we do in terms of its paideutic effect, and to do so successfully, so people follow us. The state is therefore the activity of adducing reasons for what we are doing that relate to the project of the formation of the body.²⁸ Reason and rationality serve as the accoutrements of our display, the tools and

knowledge. Practical knowledge is about all that mostly purely *is*, for all that is can and must be regarded and examined as an affordance, as a tool, as a thing.

²⁶ The Western nominalist reading of Augustine mistakes the order of *knowing* (the heuristic purpose) for the order of *being*. It confuses the *articulation*, that is the *means* and *method* of learning, for the end, which is relationship with and knowledge of God. The vocabulary of vision, counting, and 'clear and distinct ideas' may be properly employed as the *means to improve on our performance*, which I introduced in Chapter 2 as 'articulation'. Such a vocabulary of counting and vision has its proper place as the instruction that promotes the development of the learner, taking him on from stage to stage, by introducing a new lesson as he is ready for it, and which he has learn before passing on to the next. Understood to refer to the possibility of an immediate vision of the end and possibility of the abolition of mediation, the vocabulary of vision and enlightenment is disastrous. But understood as the means by which learner and instructor articulate the means to improve the learner's performance, it has a proper function. We must therefore understand all the claims of vision, of clear and distinct ideas, and of enlightenment, to have their place only with discussion of contemplation and beatific vision through liturgical mediation, introduced in 3.5.2 and represented in 5.3 below by Aquinas.

²⁷ Martin Jay *Downcast Eyes: The denigration of vision in twentieth century French thought* Berkeley: University of California Press 1993, 49 attributes the 'rationalisation of sight' to the 'increasingly formalised and distant social space of the courtly societies of the era...elaborate courtly rituals of display devised to mark the articulations of social hierarchy'.

²⁸ John H. Yoder *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press 1984, 158 argues that 'If the ruler claims to be my benefactor, and he always does, then that claim provides me as his subject with the language I can use to call him to be more humane in his ways of governing me and my neighbours. The language of his moral claims is not the language of my discipleship, nor are the

tokens by which we amplify our gestures.²⁹ When used together the concepts of power and aesthetics serve to account for the magnificent redundancy of much of our performance. Where there is no proper account of performance as the whole medium of our being, the issues of aesthetics and power appear to be stray ends. I suggest that if we hold together aesthetics and power with the other concepts to which I have drawn attention, they contribute to the proper description of our action as complexly reciprocal creaturely action, allowing a theological account of the action of God and man together in the medium of God's provision. The claim of pure knowledge is to see off the other man's medium, refuse his help in coming to know him and so come to know him without his cooperation, violently. It is to decide that the other person's medium should only be understood as threat which must be rebuffed. The claim of modernity to exert its own pure vision is a claim to see past Israel, the medium of God, and impose on Israel our own medium. So the claim is to see the objects and purposes of God's imagination and desire, even though, without the scriptures that are Israel's own self-commentary, we have no medium of imagination by which we could identify these as those objects.

The ancients conceptualised the givenness of limits as the weaving of the fates.³⁰ Without the scriptures as source of its imagination, modernity has no concept of law and no means of conceptualising givenness or of accounting for otherness. It does not understand that the action of others leaves us only certain room, not an absolute freedom. On the other hand, it does license us a freedom with definition. Modernity understands only that we weave ourselves – and thus we have no means of saying that we do not like what results.³¹

standards of his decency usually to be identified with those of my servanthood. Yet I am quite free to use his language to reach him.'

²⁹ MacIntyre is aghast at the cynicism represented by Goffman in *Interaction Ritual*. Alasdair MacIntyre *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* Second edition London: Duckworth 1985, 115 'The goal of the Goffmanesque role-player is effectiveness and success in Goffman's social universe is nothing but what passes for success.' MacIntyre is right in saying that we regard him for his particular (institutionally-determined and therefore objective) expertise (such as that of the sportsman at his sport), but Goffman is also right in insisting we also recognise him for the charisma and élan that converts him into the object of emulation, a natural leader outside his institutional role. In 2.1 and 2.7.1 I said that play within the game is informed by speech in the form of commentary and a range of para-game considerations and activities.

³⁰ See Onians R.B. *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1951 349-51.

³¹ Early Christian studies though has a more mature understanding of power than New Testament studies. The early Christians rewrote the definition of power and manliness (*virtù*) by out-performing the Roman definition of manliness by the practice of asceticism, continence and self-control. The more sophisticated hermeneutic of Early Christian studies, conscious of the issue of rhetoric, persuasion and the possibility of, by suffering, winning a world, employs the concept of performance and understands power as the modality of knowledge. See Frances M. Young *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997 for an example of the concept of paideia at work in exegesis, see Ellen T. Charry *By The Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* New York: Oxford University Press 1997 for the concept at work in doctrine. Denise K. Buell *Making Christians: Clement of Alexandria and*

Modern theology has let all the conceptuality of reciprocity and recursivity drift out of the safekeeping of theology and philosophy, to become the technique claimed by the sub-Hegelian sciences of theory, sociology, anthropology, and gender that know nothing of theological paideia. Without this conceptuality we do not realise that all our theological autonomy is moved by the tectonic shifts of the conceptualities of the tradition, in slow but constant change under pressures that it is our specifically theological task to identify. Theology must be a matter also of *theo-logic*, of logic and method, which of course must not be divorced from the *theologic*, so God-talk does not become method as such.³² Without the resources for talking about excess of human acting over and beyond the true and the good, theology cannot be science, with a proper respect for the sheer exuberance of the world. It must recover the discipline to allow talk of the world for its own sake and become more than merely morality. Without logic it cannot discern which moments demand truth discourse, which right-and-wrong discourse and which performance discourse - with the result that everything it says risks becoming trivial.

I have argued that the state was once a public project but, from the seventeenth century, became an autonomous sphere and the possession of a clique not in constitutive relationship with the whole conversation of society. It is a story of how there was once a united world of practical philosophy, then a fall and the division of the world into three separate domains of exegesis, philosophy and theology. What right do we have to tell such a story? It can be told only as a heuristic and as warning of what would happen if we did not obediently do the duty of caring for the *theo-logic*. It is not to say this is the history, but that this would be the history if we do not apply ourselves to the task we are set.³³

the Rhetoric of Legitimacy Cambridge: Princeton 1999 and Elizabeth A. Clark *Reading and Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* Cambridge Princeton 1999 show the idea at work in early Christian studies, their hermeneutic derived via Foucault and Kojève from Hegel's use of the concept of performance.

³² Hegel argued that all sciences have histories, and that a law or logic is needed to control the telling of their history within any history of mankind. He believed that we will be defined by the gods or forces of 'nature' until, by re-negotiating the concept of nature with the life sciences, we can proceed beyond the Stoic cosmology of 'nature', a nature made absolute and unreachable by Kant's epistemology, but within which Schleiermacher was content to build his religion of inwardness.

³³ The story of the fall has its place within the sum of doctrines, which themselves have not only a doxological (truth) function but also a paideutic function in the formation of the community that can praise God. The Son who does the Father's work has the right to tell the story of the fall such that it is a story that only refers to a threat vanquished.

5.3 The seventeenth century collapse of mediation.

The seventeenth century saw the collapse of mediation.³⁴ This is the story that determines who we moderns are and what place we occupy. It is the story of how action came apart from nature, humankind from creaturehood. I have said that an ontology of intermediary duties, powers and media allow us to understand human action as nested in the world of other creatures, and so to understand that action creates and is created by character and capabilities, and creates and is created by an environment and world. The economy of modernity replaces such Aristotelian accounts of intermediaries with notions and practices of immediacy. From the seventeenth century on mankind was distinguished from nature and separated from it, and ceased to be either an animal or a creature. The culture-nature split was the invention of the concepts of nature and culture, the latter seen as separation from a God-given creaturely place. Nature ceased to be the place prepared for us, and became instead the triumphant mechanical world-picture. It is the claim of Weber that the story of desire, and the work of imagination has out-worked itself, and is coming to be replaced by rationality, which will fill the world and leave no place for narrative or imagination.

When histories become too successful they succeed only in showing their inevitability. A history that attributes a breakdown to one historical moment problematises how we recover from that breakdown.³⁵ Gerard Loughlin offers a discussion of the loss of authority of Christian doctrine. Christian doctrine is lost because it is heard only within an alien metaphysic: the void, the absence of mediation, inveigled itself into the role of effective mediation of Christian doctrine and consequently its subverter.³⁶ This void was the Stoic-Epicurean metaphysic which taught that space is uniform and empty and nothing in it needs mediation to be present to us. Appropriation of Stoic and Epicurean themes in the Renaissance brought about the displacement of

³⁴ MacIntyre *After Virtue* 228-9 argues that 'It was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that morality came generally to be understood as offering a solution to the problems posed by human egoism and that the content of morality came to be largely equated with altruism. For it was in that same period that men came to be thought of as in some dangerous measure egoistic by nature; and it is only once we think of mankind as by nature dangerously egoistic that altruism becomes at once socially necessary and yet apparently impossible.' Similarly Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* 72 suggests that 'Only in the seventeenth century did both trends converge into one world picture: namely the Nominalists' passion for unequivocation with the Renaissance sense of the homogeneity of nature - *one* nature with forces to replace the many Aristotelian static natures.'

³⁵ Stephen N. Williams *Revelation and Reconciliation: A Window on Modernity* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995, 7 points out that the story of the loss of mediation told by Gunton and Newbigin does not demonstrate that anything has become inevitable or that man has thereby lost responsibility for his acts.

³⁶ See Loughlin 'The Basis and Authority of Doctrine', 44-46.

the Aristotelian metaphysic with which Christian doctrine had been in conversation.³⁷ Michael Buckley holds this Epicurean metaphysic responsible for belief in the void of infinite Euclidean space.³⁸ Loughlin uses Buckley, Frei and Amos Funkenstein to argue that scripture needs the mediation of the doctrine of the Church. Texts and scripture are not all of the same sort, or immediately readable, but require a process of learning.

John Milbank and Nicholas Lash try to determine when the dissolution of the mediation of doctrine began.³⁹ Did the process start in the seventeenth century, or earlier, with Scotus in the fourteenth or Aquinas in the thirteenth century? Colin Gunton understands Buckley to argue that Aquinas's form of analogy, the 'erection of theological structures independently of christology and pneumatology' was the underlying cause of modern atheism.⁴⁰ Gunton believes Aquinas made the assumption that two sorts of knowledge have access to the same being of God, such that one form of knowledge is immediate and the other mediate. It is no surprise when the doctrine that demands work is replaced by the one that does not, the expensive version by the cheaper. But Lash points out that the cheaper version, the 'classical doctrine' of God, is of course not knowledge of God but of the logic of knowledge of God, a retrospective demonstration of the proper use of concepts. Aquinas understands that there must be a propaedeutic to prepare the reader for the knowledge of God that was to follow. The First Part of the *Summa* intends to prepare us to read the doctrine of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, set out in the Third Part. It is not another way of teaching what the third part teaches, but of giving readers that conceptual competence with which they may embark on the real work.⁴¹ There is a pure knowledge of God, a philosophy and beatific vision: the question is who has the righteousness and readiness to embark upon it. Loughlin argues that 'the Summa is really no more than grammatical notes upon the Church's reading of scripture, being entirely determined by the scriptural story...first and last a narrative of the Word.'⁴²

³⁷ Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* 39-46. Declination conceptualises every movement as entry into new never-before-entered space, every thing is a new thing, everything confined within its own time-cell. In this metaphysic there is no responsiveness or relationship, and therefore no cause-and-effect. The Latin concept of absolute property may be related to this atomist conception of the thing without relation.

³⁸ Michael J. Buckley, S.J. *At the Origins of Modern Atheism* New Haven: Yale University Press 1987, 47-50.

³⁹ John Milbank 'Only Theology Overcomes Metaphysics' in *The Word Made Strange* 41-48; Nicholas Lash 'When did the theologians lose interest in theology?' in Marshall, Bruce *Theology and Dialogue: Essays in Conversation with George Lindbeck* Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press 1990.

⁴⁰ Gunton *The One, The Three and The Many* 138-9, cited by Loughlin.

⁴¹ Charrý *By The Renewing of Your Minds* 134-5 makes the same point for Augustine.

⁴² Loughlin 'The Basis and Authority of Doctrine' 45. Alasdair MacIntyre *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy and Tradition* London: Duckworth 1990, 140-1, 162, 169 makes a similar argument for Aquinas.

Lash and Milbank want to show that Aquinas understood that the knowledge of God has to be obediently performed in worship and in the continuous practice of the writing and re-writing of doctrine.⁴³ We need to practice speaking about God, but speaking about God is the only practice we get; by God's faithfulness our speaking may improve. Writing such a *Summa* was a dynamic, ongoing and even liturgical act, an unceasing procession around the *loci*, such that every point is mediated by every other, so writing theology is a practice of obedience, not an act that intends to bring the exercise to an end with a final statement. Milbank argues that Aquinas understands each science to bring its fruit to theology, and *philosophia* is what all this theologically obedient science amounts to. Theology is the organising principle for other sciences, the science of sciences, and *philosophia* is the practice of this theology. But are there levels and hierarchy of different sciences? Lash asks whether Milbank is not trying to turn all knowledge into theology, and to do away with other sorts of knowledge which would threaten the real claim of theology.⁴⁴

Loughlin argues that the fourteenth century collapse of mediation means that all text becomes featureless, uniform stuff. As all being is the same, so is all knowledge of being, so there is crisis about how to tell one sort of text from another and how to read any particular text. He connects Frei and Buckley's discussion of text as performance and learned, mediated and mediation-making praxis, to the discussion by Lash and Milbank of whether philosophy has its own separate realm.⁴⁵ Buckley shows that Lessius, for example, employed the argument of Cicero in *On the Nature of the Gods* to attempt to make scripture comprehensible to those who had newly rediscovered Stoic and Epicurean deism.⁴⁶ To do this Lessius separated scripture from that doctrine which represented the Church's deliberation on centuries of reading scripture. Modern biblical hermeneutics derives from these Stoic and Epicurean-addressed apologetics of Lessius. The thought that the texts of the bible and of the Church can simply be handed over and away to some non-taught other, originates in the *via moderna* belief that the knowledge of

⁴³ Lash 'When did the theologians lose interest in theology?' and 'Where does holy teaching leave philosophy? Questions on Milbank's Aquinas' *Modern Theology* 15 1999 433-444.

⁴⁴ Lash 'When did the theologians lose interest'. Milbank replies in 'Intensities' *Modern Theology* 15 1999, 445-497. See also Hadot *Philosophy as way of life* 107 'With the advent of medieval scholasticism however we find a clear distinction being drawn between *theologia* and *philosophia*. Theology became conscious of its autonomy *qua* supreme science, whole philosophy was emptied of its spiritual exercises which from now on were relegated to Christian mysticism and ethics.'

⁴⁵ This is the issue of natural theology, of whether there are two gods, one known in and by what is, a god of the Greeks, known by nature and indistinguishable from nature, and the other the God of the theologians, in charge of his own mediation, and yet who commandeers and transforms the grammar not only of 'divinity' but of 'nature' too into the grammar of creatureliness and triune Creator.

⁴⁶ Buckley *At the Origins of Modern Atheism* 40-5, 54-5.

God is available apart from God's own conceptual mediation of it. The *via moderna* had abandoned a complex ontology in favour of a univocal ontology, in which God was one being among others, and therefore object for the same immediate knowledge.⁴⁷ If all being is the same, there need only be one sort of inquiry to say what being any particular thing has. This defines theology and philosophy in opposition to one another, respectively as knowledge that does, and knowledge that does not, require mediation, and allows a stand-off between them to emerge.

Aquinas' achievement did not succeed in preventing the impoverishing ontology of the *via moderna*. Failure to appreciate Aquinas's *Summa* as part of its obedient ongoing doxological training and character formation work, left the Church's liturgical action vulnerable to analysis in terms of the Stoic-Epicurean metaphysic of absolute absence of relation and mediation, and so to dissolution.

The result of the collapse of mediation is that being is substance, all the same, and all measurable. There was a proliferation of measure: everything became infinitely divisible. When all being is of one sort how can one being be distinguished from another, except by pure 'measure'? The concept of time is the result of the division and aggregation of this univocal being. The result, argues Eric Alliez, is that time measures being univocally, and sorts it into heaps, and this heaped being has become capital – money.⁴⁸ This univocal ontology distinguishes between all being on one hand, and all relationship, structure, similarity, likeness, analogy, language and symbol on the other. The media of relationship – measure, time, money – float free in a void that we term the market-place.

What is the status of this story of the collapse of mediation? Is the loss irrecoverable and the problem insuperable? Or is it the case that offering a history of the loss of mediation is a proper part of the redemption of that loss? The mediation is not lost but remains the possession and work of God, and has never been the possession of man apart from God. In the form of Israel, God always provides this mediation to the world. Nothing has been made impossible by a fall in history, but confessing this story in the context of the eucharist is part of the process of our learning our salvation. So the question that ends this section is who can tell this history? Western being has no right or

⁴⁷ Loughlin 'The Basis and Authority of Doctrine' 46 explains that 'Once the univocity of concept and language had been established, analogy and metaphor belittled and God conceived as but another, if unique, 'extended' thing (*res extensa*) it was only a matter of time before Ockham's razor was used to remove an unnecessary hypothesis.'

means to tell a purely secular history. It has nothing it could ground this history in, no independent witness to hear this history and acknowledge it as truth. The Western history is itself about the abolition of any Other who could be such a witness. God, and in the eucharist his servant, is able successfully to tell a story that accounts for the fall without repeating it, and in telling the story to supply the being that would otherwise remain missing. This servant is the world-bearing Word who returns to God.

5.4 Law and Accommodation.

I argued in Chapter 2 that the law is the instructor of the elect community. Its purpose is to drive the community on to holiness. Without that purpose the law is merely purposeless restraint on, and compromise with, the world. The concept of accommodation represents the loss of this concept of law and its control on salvation history, and its replacement of a law without teleology. The story of the collapse of mediation confined to a Platonist metaphysic serves to make the fall timeless, making it not a story but a cosmology of upper and lower realms. But there are other metaphysics that must also be attended to, for modernity is a function of Epicureanism and Stoicism as much as of Platonism. Under a Stoic metaphysic there is no issue of a collapse from one nature to another. Attention to other metaphysics, therefore, would enable us to reduce the extent to which modernity thrives on its story of its estrangement from God. Funkenstein asks why the Church did not make more use of the Stoic cosmology that would have prevented the dualism which allowed the Epicurean void and atomism to become the determinative metaphysic and hermeneutic.⁴⁹ As the practices of mediation were hollowed out, Israel and the Church ceased to be considered self-reflective agents of mediation. Israel's practice was divorced from her teaching, the meaning of her sacrificial practices was lost and with it all understanding of her status as critic of the world of the pagans. Israel came to be understood as just another example of primitive practice. Israel's sacrifice was understood by Western anthropology as one of the many commutations of (human) sacrifice, and of the social contract that mediates and controls violence by state-building.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Alliez, Éric *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1996, 13 refers to money as 'capitalisation or the futuristic conquest of time', and believes that money 'is never anything but a certain usage of time'.

⁴⁹ Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* 43. Funkenstein continues 72 'Only in the seventeenth century did both trends converge into one world picture: namely the Nominalists' passion for unequivocation with the Renaissance sense of the homogeneity of nature - *one* nature with forces to replace the many Aristotelian static natures.'

⁵⁰ Levenson represented this approach in 3.7.1.

According to Deborah Shuger, Augustine found Israel's sacrifice a difficult issue.⁵¹ Augustine believes that '[I]t befitted God to request sacrifices in earlier times; now, however, things are different, and he commands that which befits this time.'⁵² Augustine believed that the law was handed over to Israel in instalments as Israel became ready to receive them. 'In question was the wisdom of the sacrificial ritual in ancient Israel. The pagans ask: If they were not good, why were they instituted? And if they were good, why were they abolished by a new dispensation?' Pagan polemics are directed not at the idea of the one God, but at the notion of God acting arbitrarily. Augustine replies that the process of history is not arbitrary. Like the cosmos, its parts need not be intrinsically beautiful, but need only fit together to make a beautiful whole.⁵³

Maimonides taught that the action of the gentiles is directed against Israel. God opposes polytheism throughout all ages: it is Israel's task to be his witness and to endure the trials of world history.⁵⁴ Maimonides demonstrates that every allegedly irrational precept of the law is a countermeasure to some practice of the culture of the archetypal gentiles, the 'Sabeans'. There were one-to-one inverted correspondences between each precept and the pagan counter-instance. The fact that the reasons for certain commandments have been forgotten is testimony to the success of divine teaching. God uses contingent elements within nature to change it, and sacrifices are elements of the polytheistic mentality used to transform this mentality by degrees. In *The Guide to the Perplexed* Maimonides holds that every precept may be seen as both a commandment of reason and a commandment of obedience. Maimonides' elaborate accommodationist interpretation entered late scholasticism, and Shuger believes, inspired the first comparative studies of religion.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Deborah K. Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* Berkeley: University of California Press 1994, 223.

⁵² Augustine *Epistulae* 138.1.5. *City of God* Book 10.5 (quoted by Shuger, 378) 'For if he had not wished the sacrifices he desires (and there is only one, the heart bruised and humbled in the sorrow of penitence) to be signified by those sacrifices which he was supposed to long for as if they gave him pleasure, then he certainly would not have prescribed their offering in the old Law. And the reason why they had to be changed at the fitting and predestined time, was to prevent the belief that those things were objects of desire to God himself...and to make us realise that what was required was what they signified.'.. 'Hence the meaning of the text, 'I desire mercy rather than sacrifice,' (Hosea 6,6) is simply that one sacrifice is preferred to another; for what is generally called sacrifice is really a sign of the true sacrifice. Mercy is in fact the true sacrifice.'

⁵³ Augustine continues, *Epistulae* 138.1.5, 'It befitted God to request sacrifices in earlier times; now, however, things are different, and he commands that which befits this time. He, who knows better than man what pertains by accommodation to each period of time, commands, adds, augments or diminishes institutions... until the beauty of the whole history, whose parts these periods are, unfolds like a beautiful melody.'

⁵⁴ This is the argument of Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* 237.

⁵⁵ Shuger *The Renaissance Bible* 83 argues that John Spencer *On the Ritual Laws of the Hebrews* (1685) attempted to give every precept a precise historical rationale so by demonstrating the time-boundness of every biblical

I argued in Chapter 4 that Israel's statement of the law is response to pagan law-systems. It is driven by confrontation with the pagans, so may not be explained by simple reference to nature or the requirements of biological survival. The law is the work of the tutor who prepares Israel for each new lesson.⁵⁶ But the accommodationist schema dichotomises the concepts of law and time so it is the mere passing of time that determines when the law must change to accommodate change. There were different rules and laws for different times: sacrifice had been legitimate for ancient Israel, but God had since made a new law, so now it was not.

Funkenstein believes that the patristic and medieval explanation of Israelite sacrifice led, during the Renaissance, to a 'search for correspondences and concordances of legal, religious and political institutions that express the *qualitas temporum* and hence that sixteenth century legal historicism may itself have been inspired by the traditional Christian explanation of sacrifice.'⁵⁷ Renaissance legal theory came with developmental theory: primitives have simpler and more savage laws, law develops the morals of nations, societies move on and up a single developmental path, and as they do the law needs to change to impose a regime of greater civility. Shuger takes up Funkenstein's discussion of accommodation. The belief that God's law first allowed sacrifice and later abolished it, resulted in the idea that laws change with their societies through an inexorable process of time. Shuger finds Grotius collecting examples of sacrificial rites with all the anthropological glee of Frazer, all understood as variations on commuted human sacrifice.⁵⁸ Study of the change or development of laws is the beginning of anthropology, and discussion of sacrificial substitution in the context of Roman law became discussion of property rights, economics and anthropology, the search for a mankind that was worthy of the law.⁵⁹

Shuger distinguishes between God as mediator (*rector*) and as owner (*dominus*). As *rector* God is responsible for justice and for the purity of the whole language and medium of relationship. The medium belongs to the whole population; all its interaction takes

institution he hoped to combat Jews, Catholics and 'fanatics'. Rather than relate what Israel did to any intention of hers to refute the pagans, Spencer tried to reconstruct the primitive mentality to which Israel had been assimilated, and saw her laws as attempts to wean her from the Egyptian religion.

⁵⁶ The argument of 2.1 and 6.1.

⁵⁷ Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* 241.

⁵⁸ Grotius *De Satisfactione Christi* (1617). Shuger herself believes (83) that 'the essential rites and narratives of Christianity embody the logic of blood sacrifice and originate within an archaic episteme.. penetrate behind the civilised veneer of western ideology to its violent hinterground'.

⁵⁹ Adam Kuper *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion* London: Routledge 1988 traces the origins of anthropology to nineteenth century historians of law. The pedigree is traced further through the Scottish enlighteners by MacIntyre *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* 177-89; and via Montesquieu and Herder, back to Grotius. See also Hochstrasser *Natural Law Theories* 4-37.

place within it. The owner (*dominus*) can forgive or remit a debt that is owed privately to him. The creation is God's property. Yet his creation consists of the many persons whom he has given a stake in the economy of his creation. For their stake he does not act as though he were alone, and simply remit debt.⁶⁰ God is wrathful as rector, because something that is his has been refused not to him alone, but to all the members of his economy to whom, as the creatures of God, it also belongs. It is his task to reinstate or supply the purity of the medium of the world. But Grotius represents a transition from one understanding to the other. 'God is no longer *rector* - constrained by the law, which is (the law of) what he has done, but *dominus* who may dispose as he will'.⁶¹ This is defined in terms of 'now', a 'now' that cannot be measured against earlier decisions, for there is no medium of accounting in which to do so, no set of his promises that can be quoted back to him by which he may also be held to account. Under the influence of Roman law, dubbed natural law, in the early modern era, the Aristotelian suspicion of the right of exchange over use gave way to an absolute right to control one's person and property. This movement was the anthropological complement of voluntarist theology: humans best exemplify the image of God when exercising unrestricted sovereignty and property rights.⁶²

The result of this loss of law is that the whole economy of Israel's action – sacrifice – is no longer recognisable as parody and demythologisation of the nations and so is understood instead as an act of propitiatory violence. Israel was accused of doing precisely what her deconstructive mimicry of them accused the nations of doing. The loss of law as hermeneutical medium resulted from the loss of the law as *paideia*. Sacrifice has no basis in human sacrifice.⁶³ Girard and Milbank argue that the death of Christ is the end of sacrifice but because their understanding of sacrifice is not derived from Israel's own teaching but, from some more general account of violence, it is no easy matter for them to show this. The appearance of sacrifice as problem stems from failure

⁶⁰ I introduced this issue in 1.2. O'Donovan *From Irenaeus to Grotius* 792 argues that 'The intelligibility of the doctrine turned on the understanding that God acted as the ruler of the universe, and the atonement was an 'act of justice'. A ruler, like a creditor, is free to forgive, unlike a judge entrusted with the administration of a law. But a ruler, unlike a creditor cannot simply waive the right, but has responsibility for upholding justice for the whole community.'

⁶¹ Shuger *The Renaissance Bible* 70. Gunton 'The Doctrine of Creation' in Gunton, ed. *Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* 151 indicates the *via moderna* origins of this move.

⁶² Cavanaugh 'The City – Beyond Secular Parodies' in John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, Graham Ward eds. *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* London: Routledge 1999, finds that, for Aquinas, Adam's right of property was based on *dominium utile*, justified by its usefulness to society in general. See Cavanaugh 187, 195 and Milbank *Theology and Social Theory* 12-13 on this voluntarist anthropology of rights.

⁶³ I have argued against Levenson in 3.7.1. See also Milbank *Theology and Social Theory* 392-8 and 'Stories of Sacrifice' *Modern Theology* 12 1996 .

to realise that Israel is the community that can correctly read the scriptures as the deconstruction of the gentiles - as violence.⁶⁴ The meaning of all Israel's ritual and sacrificial action is given by its place in the conversation of God with God.

5.5 Law and philosophy.

I have argued that when we discuss history we must make clear who is telling this history, and whether they are qualified to tell it because they are party to it.⁶⁵ History cannot endlessly be told without the regular work of conceptual commentary. There must be alternation between history and law, law and history, never one without the other.

David Novak believes Judaism and Christianity are both response to commandments from God. 'The ultimate fulfilment of human personhood, both individually and collectively, lies in a future and universal redemptive act by God, one as yet on the unattainable historical horizon'.⁶⁶ Duty, practice, ethics, faith, dialogue and ritual are all required to retell the story of which you are part, and to keep the commandments, to keep in balance being Jewish and *doing* Jewish. Wyschogrod argues for the total historicity of the Torah. It contains no natural law: Israel's election is the primary event and the giving of the Torah a secondary event. There is no element of the observance of the Law, but merely what Eisen calls the *misvot* of nostalgia, stories about being Jewish, or how it once was to be Jewish.⁶⁷ Judaism is the set of people telling this evolving set of stories about this people, without reference to a non-negotiable givenness of the Law. What is the relationship between the bare fact of the transmission of a tradition that changes, perhaps out of recognition, over time, and the unchanging content of the Law? Is Judaism just a telling of this history, such that secularisation is an equally valid part of Jewish history? Is secularism a meaningful concept for Judaism? Is Judaism no more than a religion? Novak finds 'Wyschogrod's biblicism and effective subordination of the Torah to the Jewish people are not adequate to the genuine dialectic between grace and merit, election and obligation.'⁶⁸

Leo Strauss argues that, because it was for an elite only, the medieval Jewish enlightenment was a much more successful enlightenment than that of the eighteenth

⁶⁴ I argued in 3.7.3 that 'violence' is simply a synonym for 'gentile world'.

⁶⁵ In 3.4.1-2.

⁶⁶ David Novak *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Jewish Justification* New York: Oxford University Press 1989, 140.

⁶⁷ Michael Wyschogrod *The Body of Faith: God in the people of Israel* San Francisco: Harper & Row 1989, 137. Arnold M. Eisen *Rethinking Modern Judaism :Ritual, Commandment, Community* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1998, 169-84.

⁶⁸ Novak *Jewish-Christian Dialogue* 243.

century. The medieval enlighteners 'were not concerned with spreading light, with educating the many to rational knowledge, with enlightening. They constantly impress on philosophers the duty to keep rationally recognised truth secret from the unchosen many.'⁶⁹ There cannot be a general enlightenment. Christian discourse of love and spirituality has resulted in the disappearance of talk of paideia and law. Reason now knows no relationship to law, virtue, habitual action, or work, but has become a hyper-spiritual and narcissistic affair.⁷⁰ What caused this dialectic of enlightenment, by which this education and liberation became a binding and captivity?⁷¹ Christians have abandoned the task of law, reason, enlightenment and leadership, and therefore have abandoned the state. But when the (Christian) discourse of love ceases to oppose reason and is re-integrated into practical philosophy, law and enlightenment, it will take up the task of leadership again.

Gillian Rose believes that 'Judaism itself is best understood as a political and theological tradition, not as an ethical one.'⁷²

The desire to conceive of law and coercion as absolutely distinct from the good and the community (already encountered in the uncoupling of Hellenism and Hebraism) represents one of the main ways in which modern Jewish thought participates in a methodological and substantive divorce which characterises the development of modern philosophy in its separation of ethics from the social analysis of the ways in which authority is legitimised.⁷³

In this divorce the Jews provide the teleology and ethics in the form of scripture, while the Greeks or Romans are understood to provide the reason, institutions and

⁶⁹ Leo Strauss *Philosophy and Law: Essays Towards Understanding Maimonides and his Predecessors* (1935) Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society 1987, 111.n2.

⁷⁰ Strauss *Philosophy and Law* 111.n2. 'By contrast, the intention of the eighteenth century Enlightenment was 'the rehabilitation of the natural through the denial (or limitation) of the supernatural; its achievement however was the discovery of a 'natural' foundation, which is anything but natural, but rather is the residue, as it were of the 'supernatural'. By the beginning of Modernity, the extreme possibilities and demands that had been discovered, out of the natural and typical, by the originators of the religious as well as the philosophical tradition had become self-evident; in that sense they had become 'natural'. Consequently they are no longer considered extremes in need of a radical explanation; instead, they themselves serve as a 'natural' foundation for the negation or reinterpretation not just of the supernatural but also and precisely of the natural and typical. In contrast to ancient and medieval philosophy that understands the extreme on the basis of the typical, modern philosophy... understands the typical on the basis of the extreme. In that way the 'trivial' questions of essence of virtue and whether it can be taught are ignored, and the extreme ('theological') virtue of love becomes the natural ('philosophical') virtue. In the 'radicalised' critique of the natural ideal of courage, the virtuous character of courage as such is formally denied... Only the history of philosophy makes possible the ascent out of the second and 'unnatural' cave into which we have fallen (less through the tradition than through the tradition of polemic against the tradition) into the first, 'natural' cave that Plato's image depicts, the ascent from which, to the light, is the original meaning of philosophising.'

⁷¹ That enlightenment caused a captivity is the argument of Theodor W. Adorno & Max Horkheimer *Dialectic of Enlightenment* New York: Herder & Herder 1972. In Chapter 6 I ask how this liberation became a binding, and suggest that theology must address the question of the captivity of man.

⁷² Gillian Rose *Mourning becomes the Law Philosophy and Representation* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, 86 'Rabbinic Judaism rests on the study of the Law, Talmud Torah: it rests not on the devastation but on the *growth* of the self in knowledge.'

implementation of power. Judaism tells us what the end is, while Greece and Rome provide the conceptual means and actual practices of government. But Rose insists against Kant that Judaism does provide the wherewithal to implement the law, and the law does address itself to the formation of a community.⁷⁴ The law therefore in its actuality means full mutual recognition, 'Spirit'. Israel is not only a project, but the means of its implementation.⁷⁵

The Western political tradition has been formed by reading the history of Israel. This tradition believes that the scriptures are open to us, that we can clearly make Israel out in them. The West has set out to copy Israel, surpass Israel and leave her behind. All the political, constitutional construction of the West represents our engagement in Israel's project, but without Israel, building where it understands Israel to have failed. It claims that Israel must be seen through and seen past so that we gentiles can make our own start.⁷⁶ We do not allow conversation with her, and she is not allowed to host our learning. We have to learn without her. It rules out the people provided to be our hosts, intermediaries, instructors and medium of our learning. It rules out the whole middle world of persons. But if gentile vision had not succeeded in making Israel its object the Western tradition would have been labouring in vain and would have succeeded neither in following nor overtaking Israel.

An account of the Western tradition will relate doctrine, law and critical philosophy. It requires a positive ethic of the sort I set out at the beginning of this chapter. The enlightenment attempts to establish clarity to see what is there, without setting out anything positive about what could or should be there. Philosophy and criticism that simply reproduce the enlightenment in this aspect offer no ethic and no lead. Criticism is part of the process of self-correction, but without intending to go somewhere it is purely a reactive and negative impulse and, Strauss argues, an escapist one. Such criticism is not able to identify its real target. The target should not be this or that set of ideas, but practices in the world, criticism of which involves setting out alternative practices. A philosophy that learns from Jewish philosophy will not separate

⁷³ Rose *Mourning becomes the Law* 86. It is therefore not the case that Hebrews think only narratively or mythologically, and Greeks logically.

⁷⁴ The claim made by Kant *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 6: 125, 166.

⁷⁵ Rose *Mourning becomes the Law* 72-5 'Spirit' is the shorthand term for the situation of all parties' systematic failure to recognise each other. The law is the falling towards or away from mutual recognition, the triune relationship, the middle, formed or deformed by reciprocal self-relations.

⁷⁶ Kant *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* 6: 127 'We cannot therefore begin the universal history of the Church (inasmuch as this history is to constitute a system) anywhere but from the origin of Christianity, which as a total abandonment of the Judaism in which it originated, grounded on an entirely new principle, effected a total revolution in doctrines of faith.'

ethics from the construction of authority, nor from the analysis of the success of that project. We have seen that Judaism represents the rebuke that Christianity does not have a law or means of implementation. It is therefore prey to an alien and pagan ethics of will, a Constantinian and individualist temptation. All agenda, construction and assessment of progress belong under the rubric of law. Learning is the mode in which social and political life may come into being. It proceeds by making mistakes, risking action, and then by reflecting on its unintended consequences and then risking further action, and so on.⁷⁷

Is Israel a polity, ethic, philosophy or religion? Which of the characteristics of the nations may she be ordered under? I have suggested that the question has to be asked but answer in these terms refused in favour of a theological account. I argued in Chapter 3 that Israel's identity is a matter of the determinative relationship in which she is the elect servant of God. Such a definition has no relation to definitions of good shared with the gentile world, and yet it must challenge and converse with the definitions that compose this world in order to claim that world. Israel must (1) receive her definition from her God and (2) be defined in opposition to the world and by the world. Both are necessary in order that she be the work of God for the world. I have asked whether the history of the West represents the reduction of the difference between Jews and gentiles, and suggested it is a difference that is yet to be established, and that it is the work of God.

5.6 Motion and emotion.

Next in this discussion of the collapse of mediation we must treat the dichotomy of motion and emotion.⁷⁸ This involves the issue of time which appeared in Chapter 4 under the concept of suffering (cross) and as the question of whose time and economy of time (resurrection). It relates to the question of whether Israel may be contained within the modern economy of time or can resist it with her own resources. The concept of motion refers to the continuum of movement of which the world is made up.⁷⁹ The total movement of this continuum is a function not only of the individuals that presently compose it, but the movement of all previous generations too. In the course of the seventeenth century though, emotion ceased to be an aspect of the motion that coursed

⁷⁷ This is the argument of Rose *Mourning becomes the Law* 38.

⁷⁸ See 6.3.2 on Kantian critique as mutation of classical dualist cosmology.

⁷⁹ Protestant theology has tended to offer only a univocal account of the individual will, in a vacuum, without adequate consideration of time or others.

through and constituted the world. It became instead what happens within.⁸⁰ Restoration pietism made emotion an individualistic concept. Without trinitarian mediation, Christian doctrine became locked into a cosmology that referred everything to that sealed container the soul, with the result that each person cultivates, not the world given to us by God as task, but his own soul, which is a whole world to itself. The consequence has been the discourse of sentiment and subjectivity. Coleridge, Schleiermacher, and the most recent of the affective theologians, René Girard, vainly tried to establish that we occupy and ourselves constitute a continuum of emulation and envy, of motion and emotion.⁸¹ A Platonist metaphysic divided the Christian doctrine of Spirit between motion on one hand, and emotion on the other, distinguishing the inner emotions of the individual from the public interaction of persons, reducing action to either psychology or politics. What fitted neither of these categories was conceptualised as spirit, which is what gave each age its specific character and drove one age to succeed another. The conceptuality of inside and outside belongs to one discourse, that of individualism, and that of the continuum of movement and passion belongs to another. We must use both, and not subject emotion and motion to that dualist cosmology that attributes priority to the individual soul over the world of many persons.⁸² We should keep two definitions of the soul in operation. One of these must be the microcosm that participates in the continuum of the movement of the cosmos, and the other the paideutic articulation that serves our public performance. Our discussion of our own soul or self should be understood to serve this paideutic articulation that serves our being for other persons.⁸³

⁸⁰ See Garber 'New doctrines of the body, its powers and place' and James 'The passions in metaphysics and the theory of action' in Daniel Garber and Michael Ayers eds. *Cambridge History of Seventeenth Century Philosophy* Cambridge 1998, 553-623, 913-51 .

⁸¹ Desire as will without imagination has no content. The recovery of the modality of *how* is the modality of desire and emotion which together constitutes a continuum and world. It is an emotion-world, and thus a sea of all movement. Cause (touch, push) is not the only mode. Emotion is the missing third term of the tripartite soul which is not only intellect (reason) and will. Emotion (plurality) makes a third term. Will alone does not make desire but requires a thesaurus of desires, a list of what is desirable, and many accounts of what is good which compete from which to choose. A univocal account of the will does not answer the question of *how much*, how much more than the other man who wants that same thing. In 1800 Ricardo invented a multi-level account of will as a cascade of will-units – marginal preference – that always find their own relative place, and as 'economics' his account has succeeded in displacing others by driving them into minority discourse of, for example, religion. Modern theology continues to operate on a metaphysic of will that sees the single man standing alone in a void of mediation before his God. Such a univocal conception of the will relates only to a situation in which notionally we can have whatever we want without foregoing anything.

⁸² Bernd Wannenwetsch 'The political worship of the Church' *Modern Theology* 12 1996, 278 argues that 'the Church's worship of God is the overcoming of political antinomies, the most important of which is that between public and private.'

⁸³ For the seventeenth century abandonment of these in favour of the soul as internal to the individual, see Isabel Rivers *Reason, Grace and Sentiment A study of the language of religion and ethics in England 1660-1780* Volume 2 *Shaftesbury to Hume* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000; Frederick C. Beiser *The*

The seventeenth century discussion of passions has become the modern discussion of time. Modernity believes that the individual gives and receives nothing in his encounter with his peers. He does not suffer either gain of being or loss of being from them. I said in Chapter 1 that the result of denying ourselves the conceptuality of ontological credit and debt is that we are utterly unable to say what it is we suffer, lack or inflict on one another. Suffering that is not identified as the impact on us of specific groups of others becomes simply fate, and in the economy of modernity this fate appears as time. Time is a debt that is unrelated to any action in the world, either our own or anybody else's. Temporality is the question of what change is undergone. We must relate this to the question of who inflicts change on whom, and who is master of whom. The question of time is, whose time is it? It is the question of who can measure and out-measure whom? God's time for man and being for man is not what man inflicts on God or what God must suffer involuntarily, but is God's determination to be for man and with him. Time must be understood not as non-personal substance (or equally, absence), but as the action of God who has time for us.⁸⁴ Only thus is it a question about God's condescension to suffer and bear us, to take our weight, be measured (and timed) by us.

The modern concept of time represents our refusal to allow the continuing personhood of the persons of the past. The refusal to understand temporality as debit and credit of being, makes all being the same. Time is then only what passes without in any way effecting what is. These two concepts of fleeting time and unchanging being constitute the economy of modernity.⁸⁵ Hegel complained that Christianity was being reduced to mere pietistic soul-talk and subjectivity that reproduces a dualism of intellectual and sensible realms.⁸⁶ Spirit, the concept of God at work in the world,

Sovereignty of Reason: The Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment Princeton: Princeton University Press 1996, 139-40, 165-71; Susan James *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy* Oxford: Clarendon 1997; Raymond Martin and John Barresi *Naturalization of the Soul: Self and Personal Identity in the Eighteenth Century* London: Routledge 2000; Michael Losonsky *Enlightenment and Action From Descartes to Kant: Passionate Thought* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001.

⁸⁴ The oneness and indivisibility of space (infinitely and uniformly divisible) we associated with Newton is the concept of the oneness, simplicity and indivisibility of God. The concept of space derives from that of spirit: it is a displaced pneumatology. Newton's space is all-equal, absolute sameness, identity, endless divisibility and multipliability of all things equally and so the abolition of difference. Time (= the uniformity of time) represents the idiom of spirituality in the economy of Modernity.

⁸⁵ We can ask whether Modernity is any more than a shrill discourse of the accelerating rate of change that results from the separation of time from event and teleology.

⁸⁶ Alan M. Olson *Hegel and the Spirit: Philosophy and Pneumatology* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992 36-52, 151 explains that Hegel was concerned that theology was being taken over by a conception of Spirit reduced to mere subjectivity. This subjectivist reduction was particularly pronounced in christology in which Christianity is reduced to an emotivistic mystery cult focused on the personality of Jesus. Schleiermacher encouraged this subjectivism by failing to address adequately the content implicit in the trinitarian conception. Hegel therefore opted for 'speculative pneumatology as the centre of his system, since it was his conviction that only Spirit, considered in its fullness, could reconcile without compromise

without theological conceptual maintenance work, slowly separates under the pressure of the idealism of the tradition, reverting to serve a dualism between body and spirit, and between physics and metaphysics, teleology and human action. We have to ensure that our theological concepts remain in touch with the biological, chemical and physical. In this way it can refer to the world and be scientific, and science can be brought into conversation with teleology, so discussion of human action is kept in conversation with what is.⁸⁷ Without reference to the work and ends of God we have no way of distinguishing between needs and desires, or means of discerning the proper necessity laid on us. Our action and our knowledge successfully refer only when we receive them obediently as gifts that give us our place in the purpose of God.

5.7 Recovery of metaphysics as political task.

The belief that we are post-metaphysical and that knowledge is unproblematic is an indication of how securely we have set ourselves within a one-world economy. I have indicated that this claim to be one is a function of the claim to include all, to be plural and comprehensive. This oneness is a function of many worldviews and metaphysics that constitute an illusory plurality. Christianity is an address to all metaphysics that cooperate in this single economy. These metaphysics are the languages of the nations of the world, and the gospel speaks all languages to speak to all nations.⁸⁸ The theological task involves interaction with the metaphysical tradition to identify competing orientation schemas, contest them and play them off one against the other. I have argued that theology must

faith and knowledge.' Welker, Michael *God the Spirit* Minneapolis: Fortress 1994, 289 'Hegel is correct when he notes with sadness that the 'speculative consideration and knowledge of the nature and activity of spirit has declined.. in recent times, even to the point of losing even a vague notion of it'.' 'Spirit' is what nature and morality made together before being divided by Socrates.

⁸⁷ Dietrich Ritschl *The Logic of Theology: A brief account of the relationship between basic concepts in theology* London: SCM 1986, calls for a theology that can engage in a more energetic conversation with the whole range of metaphysics, which requires a more Trinitarian, less dualist theology. 51 'Over against the (Augustinian) restriction of theology to the relationship between God and humanity (or the soul) there were constant serious attempts to think in terms of the triangle God-humanity-nature.' And similarly D.W. Hardy 'Christ and Creation' in T.F. Torrance *The Incarnation: Ecumenical Studies in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed* Edinburgh: Handsel Press 1981, 100 points out that 'Our inherited presuppositions cause us to read the Gospel in thoroughly mentalistic and moral terms, giving most attention to Jesus' self-consciousness and intentions, rather than in spatio-temporal, physico-chemical, biological and socio-cultural terms.'

⁸⁸ I presented these metaphysics as orientation schemas in Chapter 2. For four centuries and more the critical and sceptical effort of philosophy has been directed solely against ontology, meanwhile our everyday practices, without ontology as the conceptuality of participation by which we could recognise them and unthink them, are lost, mired in the habits of criticism itself become ontology. Because we have not cultivated the conceptuality by which to see our everyday action as determined by our own history, our everyday habits have become to us a nature. Norbert Samuelson 'The Death and Revival of Jewish Philosophy' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 70.1 2002, 121 argues that 'Most of the concerns that characterised pre-twentieth century philosophy have moved to disciplines other than philosophy...the

respond to, and where it is required in correction, employ a dualist metaphysic which allows us to distinguish one economy from another, and to say that what we presently have is not yet what God intends for us. And I have argued that theology must also respond to and employ a *non*-dualist metaphysic which does not contrast body and mind, material and spiritual, but which allows that there are modes of bodiliness, and that some constitute a better performance of bodiliness than others. God intends for us that performance that brings us from poorer modes, through richer modes, into one economy with him. Since this economy is the work of the Holy Spirit, we should call this most bodily performance ‘spiritual’.

There is therefore no abdication from the work of metaphysics. The enlightenment has not removed this responsibility from us. Ian Hunter argues that there was not one but several rival enlightenments, each with its own abjuration of ontology and its replacement by an anthropology of its own.⁸⁹ There is ‘no sharp break between these philosophies and Christian theology, and no epochal shift from a religious age to a secular “age of reason”’.⁹⁰ Milbank argues that there must be an ongoing metaphysical task. Doctrine must not become constrained by a metaphysic that dichotomises inner and outer space. Being and space must be kept complex.⁹¹ Milbank argues that neither Augustine nor Plato need result in interiority.⁹² Frederick Bauerschmidt argues that, in his thinking on the trinity, Augustine understands persons to be constituted by relations, but when thinking about language he retreats to an Aristotelian position in which signs

places today to master this art are departments of mathematics, linguistics, cognitive sciences and the life sciences, not departments of philosophy.’

⁸⁹ Hunter *Rival Enlightenments* 23-4 ‘In Pufendorf’s natural law we discover a political anthropology of man as creature whose violent passions threaten his capacity for sociality, thereby necessitating the creation of a sovereign power capable of imposing the rules of sociability as law. Leibniz’s practical philosophy, however, is grounded in his platonic ‘monadology’, treating man as an intellectual soul capable of participating in the divine intellection of the substance, and thereby perfecting himself through contemplation. Following Pufendorf’s footsteps, Thomasius’ quasi-epicurean anthropology of passional man necessitates an ethics of self-restraint and a jurisprudence of sovereign command. Finally, in Kant’s anthropology of man’s dual intelligible-sensible natures, we encounter a further elaboration of the metaphysical *homo duplex* driving Kant to construct an ethics and politics in terms of man’s self-purifying recovery of his self-governing rational being.’

⁹⁰ Hunter *Rival Enlightenments* 25.

⁹¹ John Milbank ‘Sacred Triads: Augustine and the Indo-European Soul’ *Modern Theology* 13 1997, 461 argues that ‘properly speaking, there are no internal spaces: an internal space is only a fold which can be unfolded and so re-externalised. Every inside can be penetrated because we really remain always on the outside: we go inside a house, because the outer walls fold inwards, while remaining strictly speaking exterior.’ I argued in 2.7.1-3 for this complex space that is the function of alternation, recursivity and of persons therefore.

⁹² See Milbank ‘The Soul of Reciprocity Part One: Reciprocity Refused’ *Modern Theology* 17, 2001, 337 and Catherine Pickstock ‘Music: Soul, City and Cosmos after Augustine’ in Milbank et al *Radical Orthodoxy*. In his discussion of ‘Inwardness’ Charles Taylor *Sources of the Self* 132-40 refers to the inwardness of Plato and Augustine to mean something more like the gathering and re-grouping of forces in order to articulate your performance and so improve on it.

refer to essences (denotative), not relations (connotative), in a correspondence rather than a coherence account. In Chapter 2 we encountered such a 'mirror' view of language in Augustine's belief that words are labels that correspond to things in the world. We said that this did not account for the processes of learning or the time-tensed character of a world of persons and plurality. Stoics on the other hand, with a cosmology in which tension and becoming are central, refer a word to the sentence in which it is set, so the sentence, not the word is the unit of sense. Milbank wants Augustine to extend the stoic account of language from the trinity to all language and so replace a metaphysic of substance with one of relation – a non-dualist Stoicised Christian theology.⁹³ Funkenstein also asks why Tertullian's defence of the corporeality of God, which is close to biblical *spirit* and Stoic *pneuma*, did not strike deeper roots in Christianity.⁹⁴ Bauerschmidt thinks Funkenstein is correct in seeing the difficulties of a logic 'in which connotation entirely supplants denotation and a metaphysics that emphasises flux and tension over substance.'⁹⁵ The Platonism of the Forms involves the belief that things separate out to their original places above and below. Platonism also understands, however, that time represents the flow of being. It is not therefore a simple metaphysic of emanation and return, but one of many perichoretic modes of movements. It is the sum of this movement (round and round, down and back up) that we name time. Milbank argues that Plato and Augustine understand all these flows not as separating out to create ever deeper interiority, but as melodic, contrapuntal and harmonising circles and periodicities.⁹⁶

I argued in 2.6-7 that there is not one time, but many warring times. We must therefore say again that there has been no collapse of mediation. Modernity and postmodernity are no more than these two beliefs first in the steady coming into being of new time, and secondly in the singleness of time. They are the conceptual equivalent of what previous ages knew as *spirit*. This myth of a single, seamless and inexorable time, the protological ontology, understands us to be both pushed and pushing forward, out of the ground of dead materiality, up into the air of new open space. But it is our theological task to subject this monad time to theological criticism. In our discussion of secularity, the collapse of mediation and of modernity therefore, it is not a matter of preferring one metaphysic, metaphor or model. It is about responding to and

⁹³ See Bauerschmidt 'The Word Made Speculative?' *Modern Theology* 15, 1999, 420; Milbank *The Word Made Strange* 89-90.

⁹⁴ Funkenstein *Theology and Scientific Imagination* 43.

⁹⁵ Bauerschmidt 'The Word Made Speculative?' 421.

⁹⁶ A clearer version of Milbank's argument is made for example by Wolfgang Iser *The Range Of Interpretation* New York: Columbia University Press 2000, 102-3.

transforming all such pagan cosmologies and metaphysics.⁹⁷ Philosophy must be understood as theology's own practice of self-regulation and language-maintenance. The problem is not excessive Platonism or Aristotelianism, nor is the object the achievement of a Christian worldview or metaphysic. There are many competing paganisms and Christianity is in conflict with them. Christian theology is even, according to Bayer, 'a science of conflict'.⁹⁸

5.8 Law and scripture as resource of imagination.

Scripture is the resource of imagination and desire. The Church reads this resource in order to cultivate desire by the practice of *epiclesis*. This way it can give a more theological definition to the concepts of emotion, passion and time, and recover the full action of the body and of the otherness of others. This will involve rethinking being and entities, not as something alien to us, but as our own (plural) action, product, and frame and platform of future action. Modernity can discern no difference between Israel's scripture, doctrine and law, and all Western writing and institution-building. For modernity all writing is equally constitutive of desire and *telos*. Scripture read apart from the obedient community, without relation to its being as the word of God, becomes merely writing, a set of licences and permissions that describe and defend a closed and autonomous economy. Writing rendered anonymous and infinitely capable of division into units is the most freely exchangeable form of writing. Denominated into units small enough to permeate everywhere, such writing acts as that universal medium of reconciliation the economy of modernity knows as money. Without scripture there is no law, and without law there is no concept of givenness or otherness. The disappearance of the concept of law, of scripture as the address of God to man, is the story of accommodation to human autonomy and the disintegration of law and scripture into the mere marking of successive ages, the passing of that time which is the currency of modernity.⁹⁹ The attempt to say that Israel has no place in the West or that the West has taken its ethics and self-identity not from Israel but from some other source purely its own, is an attempt

⁹⁷ In Chapter 6 I argue that theology must confront not only the dualism produced by the complex history of the interrelationship of Aristotelianisms and Platonisms, but the non-dualist discourses of Epicureanism and Stoicism that account for the concept of nature that supports the economy of Modernity.

⁹⁸ Oswald Bayer 'Theology in the Conflict of Interpretations – before the text' *Modern Theology* 16 2000, 501.

⁹⁹ Rose *Dialectic of Nihilism* 131-70 makes this argument

to make the economy of modernity safe from the threat of the economy of the one God.¹⁰⁰

The bible is a work of imagination and a resource for the imaging of possible futures. The claim of the scriptures of Israel is that they are about God only because God is not only their speaker but their first hearer, reader and performer. The scriptures have their reception, implementation and confirmation in him. On this basis alone can the bible be properly read as literature of the development of the imagination and desire of a people. Indeed all Western institution-building can equally be understood as a work of imagination, for politics, contract-making and conventions of autonomy claim to open and enable a future. The category of literature is therefore essential for the scriptures. But equally essential is the category of history, talk of the world in terms of the truth of what has been.¹⁰¹ The bible is reducible neither to imagination nor to history – nor even to the two together. The law makes a third term. The difference between literature and history is the same as that between the imagination of Israel and the imagination of the gentiles, for whom the future means just more of the past, history without purpose or end. Theology understands that Israel is in charge of the work of imagination, knowing that she will use her own resource of her history with her God to that end, not the wish-lists of the nations. As the one elected by God, she is the guarantor and medium that there will be a future for the nations – not in their history – but in her history, the history the one God shares with her. Exploration and recovery of the past is the whole idiom of the future. By the exercise of grief and lament our expectations may be expanded and we may come to know that there is such a thing as a future. In this future, the past is no longer past, but is rather opened and sustained in life, and itself becomes alive and life-generating.

We have dealt with the scriptures as mediation under the rubrics of history, literature and law. We must alternate between them, never one without the other. We must tell the story, then discuss its grammar and the concepts used in it. There is no talking about history without subsequently making clear who is talking, who it is that is telling that history and is able to tell that history because it is one to which they are party.

¹⁰⁰ Rose *Mourning becomes the Law* 86 argues that the ‘desire to conceive of law and coercion as absolutely distinct from the good and the community...represents one of the main ways in which modern Jewish thought participates in a methodological and substantive divorce which characterises the development of modern philosophy in its separation of ethics from the social analysis of the ways in which authority is legitimised.’

¹⁰¹ In 3.5.3 Perdue and Balentine argued that scripture ceased first to be law, and then to be history, and that it has become instead merely imagination, ‘narrative’. In 3.4.2 we saw Fowl, Wright and Hays argue for

History cannot be obediently told without regular interruption by commentary-work, which clears away the conceptual debris and allows the history to continue. History is the building together of relationship: the work of criticism and judgment, and the conceptual ancillary work of philosophy is a necessary part of this building. I set out the charge made by the economy of modernity (most explicitly by Spinoza and Kant) that Israel was incapable of self-government and thus unfit for any wider leadership role. I have said that Israel is the leadership of the West. Only Israel in the person of her Messiah, by the exercise of her scripture and law, can read the whole entity and action (writing) of the West. Israel can read this Western being as the transformation of the gentiles by baptism into constitutive association with the people of God's election. Israel interrupts and saves Western being from succumbing to utter captivity by imagining and witnessing to it what it could be within the economy of the one God. The proper basis of such an account is theological, one which relates it to the account-giving and receiving of God by God.

constitutive narrative at least for the ancient world by which the economy of Modernity assumes Israel is confined.

Chapter 6

The economy of the one God

The worship of the one God constitutes the economy of God for man. Israel is brought into this economy to be God's witness for us. Israel represents liberation for us from other alien imperatives and economies. Rival gods, the world, our mundane practices and modernity must all feature in our account of the God who is for us.

6.1.1 Scripture as orthopaedic.

The preceding five chapters have provided a hermeneutic of the scriptures of Israel. I argued that God brings Israel into agency by the process of learning and sanctification led by the temple creation liturgy. The action of priests and worshippers in Israel is integrated into the economy of God's action. I have argued that performance is accompanied by commentary. What Israel sees in the Temple at Jerusalem she sees because she is taught to participate in it as action. Sacrifice, and the teaching and worship that offer commentary on it, are simultaneous, one not prior to the other. Though it is subject to the usual processes of public discourse, Israel's cultic action does not allow itself to be interpreted in terms that Israel has not adopted for the purpose. It is not available to the sight of those outside Israel.¹ The question of who can read the scriptures is also the question of who can read Israel.

God is the guarantor that it really is his Law that Israel has. The Law is instruction and a process of joint target-setting that enables assessment of compliance and implementation. In addition to converse and narrative, the Law takes the form of propositions. Since those party to them, know them, they are able to develop a shorthand for these propositions. As a result scripture is full of complex summary statements unreadable to outsiders. Israel and her God together share the knowledge that Israel will grow until she is able to act and move with ease within the territory determined for her by God. Because Israel knows this, she can say that she is not yet

¹ See 4.5 for discussion of vision in exegesis; 5.2 discusses political claims made by employment of the concept of vision.

what she will be. This is what she does in confessing her failure and sin. The concept of sin is meaningful only to this people under this instruction and discipline.²

Building on the argument of Chapter 2 we can say that scripture is the learner's articulation of the lesson she receives from her instructor. This lesson can only be read in partnership with Israel, by the baptised community given the Spirit by the obedient Son. He transforms our movements into hers. Scripture is the orthopaedic tool by which a new set of practices are taught. It is the set of protocols which learners must learn to internalise, so the Word of God becomes their own mind and word. The single intention of the law is to propel its students towards adulthood and to the stature of Jesus Christ. The process of the production of the holy people is not finished. Judgement and discernment of progress is part of the process of refinement. If the law itself has become disordered it can no longer order people into the place right for each, but has the effect of stalling our growth. Then the law, good and necessary to us at one specific stage, would hold and constrict us just when we should be released and encouraged forwards. The law designed to build us up, itself needs be maintained. The law is effective as long as the instructor is present to the learning community in the person of the Spirit. Separated from Christ, it cannot do this, but when the garment of the Law is worn by Christ it takes its form from him and is able to give us his stature.³

Scripture is the screen and visor by which we are protected from the brightness of the Word. Like the veil with which Moses protected those who saw him, scripture acts as the screen that lets the brilliance of God filter slowly through to us, gently promoting our growth, rather than allowing it to blaze out to endanger us. Scripture protects us. It represents the gentle not-all-at-once-ness of the Word of God.⁴ The action of Israel that we have received in the form of scripture and eucharist topples the alternative constructions of the gentiles, and prevents the world knitting itself together into any form other than the form of Christ. It is the one action that keeps the world open, telling us that the Messiah is not here, and that what the world presently is, is not the end.⁵ True reading produces the transformation of the readers, so hermeneutics *is* ethics, the reading of people into the Church. The spiritual sons of Abraham are the ones who can tell the story of Abraham. Their narration of the action of God is witness to their paternity.⁶

² See 4.1

³ See 5.1.2 on the mutually constitutive relation of law, exegesis and doctrine.

⁴ In 3.5.2 we saw that rabbis and the early Church took care to introduce scripture to learners only as they were ready for it.

⁵ The point made by Farrow in 3.1.2.

⁶ See 3.2

6.1.2 Scripture as clothing and dressing.

Jesus holds the life of the generations of Israel. Scripture is the clothing by which he holds them, and the process by which he prepares them one for another. He is the agent by which this clothing changes from external cladding (scripture) to internal structure (bodiliness). The patriarchs are bound up to each other in the web and fabric of the Son. His being raised – from them – is the guarantee that they are sealed in him and that his call will raise and assemble them.⁷ His resurrection makes them all present to him. Only in him, by his Spirit, will they become present to each other. These many generations of Israel are made present to us only in the mode of scripture. The Son wears them bound about him, as the garment of scripture.⁸ They are not immediately present – resurrected – either to each other, or to us. They are hidden from each other in different pockets of time, held together only by their one Lord. They look forward to the day of Christ. Then the Spirit will raise them and make them present to the Father as the body of the Son. Their resurrection and perfection is dependent also on us. For scripture to become the full resurrected presence of Israel we have to be grown and raised as readers and members of Israel, such that we can read them, return their presence to them and have our presence returned to us by them. Our being found obedient is the moment at which their waiting is over and we will be brought together in one assembly.

Scripture prepares us. To this end it protects us, and in stages removes this protection from us. The resurrection has already raised this protection from one of our number. It is his unity, and his unity with the Father, that effects the unity and efficacy of scripture. The patriarchs are presently mediated to us as one single instantiation of Israel, the co-presence of the whole company in the one person, Jesus Christ. As one and complete, he is the arrival of the many. We are being trained to perceive and receive this host in him, the one they have sent ahead. They are present to us as the fabric of the scripture. Within the fabric of this tabernacle we grow from smaller and simpler into larger and more complex dimensions, each preparing us for the bigger space beyond it, where God and his hosts wait.⁹ When this enclosure has become our own body and

⁷ In 4.1.1 I argued that he is raised from them. Their bonds – ‘death’ – fail to hold him.

⁸ See 4.1.3

⁹ The literature of apocalyptic (4.5.2) suggests that Yahweh lets himself through into the tabernacle once a year as the high priest, or once a Sabbath, so our eyes get accustomed to him.

clothing, it will give way to bring us immediately before one another because before God.¹⁰

In Chapter 4 I suggested that Israel is the proper reader of the written self-commentary of the West. Israel is able to pick up the script the West regards as its own and weave it into Israel's own script, to make one new garment. On the cross Jesus takes the world's script away from the world, undoes it, and out of it writes a new and living script. He takes away the gentile mind and there establishes the mind of Christ, the history and law of God and his people. The scripture of Israel constitutes the new mind for this new people.¹¹ It is the case law that determinates the modes of behaviour by which its members may grow into relationship with one another. Familiarity with these cases and the keeping of the first level rules is the means by which a new public mind and *sensus communis* comes into being. This is the basis for the development of those further levels of rules and a community able to deduce new rules, which in turn is the means of opening for each other a future.

6.2.1 Writing and immediacy.

What I have said in terms of the theology of Israel I must now say again in the terms of the Western philosophical tradition represented by the discussions referred to in Chapter 2. The apparatus of visualisation, of which writing is part, makes things appear and gives them their presence. It takes from the *ousia* of those behind, thereby putting them behind, and gives to those up front, thus bringing them to the front and giving them greater being.¹² The Western modern economy of being can only replace one by another and thus is a failure to sustain all. Theology must say that another action than this zero-sum modern economy of immediacy and visualisation is available to us through Israel. To say this, theology must identify the habits of which the world consists, and argue that they represent a failure of being. It can identify writing, representation, and the whole apparatus of intellect as a way in which we fail to return to each other the being that God gives us for one another. All the modern practices of writing and representation represent one – impoverished – mode of being for one another.

Another habit and mode we have encountered is that of the microcosmic modelling and maintenance that related to Israel's political and cosmological claim. By

¹⁰ See 1.2.2 on the tragic-biological hypostasis and 2.7 on place.

¹¹ If the scripture of Israel is the mind of Christ it is also the answer to the question of the psychology of Jesus – one of the phantoms pursued by (supersessionist) New Testament studies.

¹² In 1.3.1-2 I suggested we need to provide such a debit and credit account of being.

contrasting the modern schema and economy of representation and writing with Israel's schema and economy of animal semiotics we may recover a sense of the whole action of the body. The schema of writing suggests there are two worlds, the world of presence and the world of writing that reflects it. But the world is not divided into a world of bodiliness and a second world of writing (representation). Israel's economy of action can liberate us from the modern schema and economy of action. A single world is being brought into being, and this is a statement of the doctrine of creation.¹³

Modernity has a dualism of substance and representation. It has no account of time as plural action. Modernity makes invisible the recursivity of *time*. It represents a particular tunnel vision, along with the way we police one another's observance of this tunnel vision, and so represents the particular idiom in which we assert our hold on one another. We believe that our predecessors have no effect on us, that we are simply pushed along by the outward unidirectional flow of time. The hermeneutics of modernity understands text not as relatedness and wovenness, but as object on a flat surface visible to all. I have argued that our place is woven and written for us, and only *co-written by* us. The new hermeneutics of narrative has not yet brought home that our public being is a function of other people's weaving and writing, not merely a function of the will of the individual. It is the work of society to model and imagine for itself new spaces, places and idioms of relatedness. The whole effort of society is to imagine what is not yet. It is the task of leadership, by the exercise of imagination, to open places that allow us to grow and become. Scripture is the education of desire through imagination: it weaves and writes us a place and part in the household of God.

6.2.2 The apparatus of formation.

In order to find a theological hermeneutic that will faithfully represent the address of God to the world we must now attempt to relate the scriptural hermeneutic sketched in 6.1 with a general hermeneutic.¹⁴ We have seen how writing (representation) has, in large

¹³ I argued in 5.1 that reason should be understood as public conversation, oriented to form a people and bring that people into one conversation about the good. Writing and reasoning, in which we must include the rationality we call economic rationality, is to serve and commentate on this public doing. Its purpose is neither to form an autonomous realm nor to become the whole and only possible idiom of the realm of public doing.

¹⁴ John Webster 'Hermeneutics in Modern Theology' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51 1998 distinguishes between a general hermeneutic (represented by Jeanrond) and a special or theological hermeneutic (represented by Watson). A general or universal hermeneutic is a set of descriptions of social human action, bodiliness and co-presence of the sort offered in Chapter 2. Webster plumps for Watson's theological hermeneutic (309-11). Theology must provide and defend the hermeneutics that is required by its subject matter. This much is true. But theology must also go on to the offence, and set out to show the limits of

part, come to function as a synonym for *being* in the economy of modernity. This discussion enables us to say that scripture is an orthopaedic interface, a covering and body prepared for us. Scripture is both software, and the hardware that opens and reads that software and makes it determinative of the body of the Church. This writing – scripture – opens us to and builds us up into a new action and being. That writing that takes its lead from the scriptures of Israel can be understood as two dimensions that open three dimensions to us. These three dimensions must open a further dimension, of *time*, and so open an *n*-dimensional world.¹⁵ The scriptures of Israel are a set of instructions the second instalment of which does not become visible until the first instalment has been executed. Each set of instructions is addressed only to other subsequent yet hidden sets of instructions. They become active only given eventualities that cannot be anticipated.¹⁶ There is no viewpoint from which the bible can be seen all at once. The previous level of instructions acts as the operating system for the next. In every case they act as the mechanism which opens and makes visible, not a set of propositions, but another and further set of variables, dimensions and affordances.¹⁷ We are therefore not the first reader of the bible. Rather each instalment of instructions realises itself as the obedient body of the reading community. Each set of instructions therefore is reader and installer of each subsequent set of instructions. Scripture is not only speech but also the hearing and receiving of its own speech, and the giving of the next utterance that responds to the efforts of the learner.

These instructions lay down a new set of pathways and circuitry that produces a people with the mature behaviour of Israel. This people is able to receive God's time from him, to open it to the world, and from the world to return it to God again.¹⁸ I said

any general and therefore worldly hermeneutics. It must deconstruct them by pointing to the histories from which they arose to demonstrate that these do not have the necessity that they claim. Theology is not engaged in a work of providing answers to questions asked by other disciplines - no correlation method here – but it must hear the world (and so let its interlocutor give some account of itself) and hear it better than the world hears itself, because theology does so hopefully, and therefore with higher ambitions for the world than the world has for itself.

¹⁵ I related learning to being drawn from simpler to more complex dimensions in 2.1. and related these dimensions to affordance within environments in 2.4.

¹⁶ This is to employ the conceptuality of affordance within environments I introduced in 2.4, and the concepts of discursivity (the alternation involved in conversation) and recursivity (by which we query any claim of any account to be the single settled version of what has been) introduced in 2.6.

¹⁷ Scripture is an 'inscription-making device for a visualisable result'. It makes mankind visible and readable to the new mind of the Christian community. Imaging technology does not see what is *inside*. That would return us to the radical dualism of Descartes' dichotomy of inside and outside. Imaging technologies are expressivist – they constitute their object into an image for us. We develop the skill of readings such as analogical representations as representations of wholes. Don Ihde *Expanding Hermeneutics: Visualism in Science* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1998, 160 argues that 'instrumentation is a complex inscription-making device for a visualisable result.'

¹⁸ We discussed these in 2.4 and as circumcision in 4.4.1.

in 2.1 that the learner and supervisor together articulate the steps and units by which the learner can progressively achieve the fullness of the action of the game. We learn to improve on our performance by analysing it in progressively simpler idioms and dimensions. I related scripture to this skill of articulation and analysis of our *habitus*, and called it orthopaedic. I have linked scripture to the project of the formation of a people which I related to the whole modern action of institution-building, and the Western economy and entity that results. Only for this holy people would there be a world (interface and environment) distinct from them, one which could respond to them as to a steward set over it by God. This community is being drawn in to the n -dimensions of the inexhaustible economy of God. This economy of God appears as two economies or two dimensions, of bodies and ideas, things and writing, in order to develop the competence and readiness of this new community for the further economies God has for it.

God is the first knower. He is the first reader, both of the world, and of all texts in it.¹⁹ He is the new testament and witness. He can open or hold closed. He can open, and break off pieces to nourish us with. We must submit hermeneutics to the doctrine of God as judge and as knower to show that all our knowledge is knowledge under licence. It can be revoked, from a distance, without our realising. God is not distant from his word, but it is immediately with him so this king can close a gate at the other end of his land simply by a nod. With the bible we have the whole world in our hands, entirely present to us in microcosm.²⁰ Yet, without him, we are without means to see what it is. I argued in 2.4 that we are in reciprocally-constitutive relation with our environment, which is itself the history of our economy of being, present to us as entity. We can be identified apart from this economy of being only by the God who is able to read and transform our history and thus our economy. We can be raised from it only by him. He can give us a new and larger place within the eschatological economy.

¹⁹ Christopher Seitz *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998, 11 argues that 'Historical-critical methods and hermeneutics of assent will stand outside and fail to grasp that God is reading us, not we him.'

²⁰ David S. Yeago 'Jesus of Nazareth and Cosmic Redemption: The Relevance of St. Maximus the Confessor' *Modern Theology* 12 1996, 182 finds Maximus making a claim similar to one I have made above: 'The cosmos, then is a sort of bible, and the bible is a cosmos, each at once concealing and revealing the Logos.'

6.3 Accounting for resistance to the speech of God

In order that our speech become *theological* it has to move from talk about God to talk about the *world* understood as God's world. Then it has to return again to God-talk. Truthful talk about God is a good practice which can turn other practices to the good. Practices constitute the field from which ideas emerge, and ideas the field from which practices emerge. The purpose of our discussion is not the ideas themselves, but how these ideas aid us to articulate and improve our practices. We must not attempt finally to move beyond talk of practices, persons and their objects, for then what we say would serve only to distinguish and separate the spiritual from the material. It would be dualising and spiritualising, and would result in our failure to know the world as the single creative work of God.²¹

The world addressed by the Word of God is not one. It is in itself many words and claims. The Word breaks up this world and commandeers and re-gathers these words to give them a new place and employment within the circulation of his economy. God's words return to him and are commissioned by him for us again. In the person of the ascended God-man who sits at the right hand of the Father, man returns this Word from the world to God. In him all the speech of the world is caught up in the speech the Father receives again as his own. The world makes the claim to be one. The doctrine of the *one God* says it is not the world but God who is one. I have argued that a number of accounts must be present in any attempt to talk about the world. We cannot simply say what the world *is*, or what modernity *is*. Theology must be aware of the range of conversations to which it must remain committed, for its task is to make such conversations feel the challenge to their autonomy that theological discourse represents. All theological statement intends to make statements about the world properly complex to prevent every would-be definitive statement of the world until the world is reconciled with its Lord.

²¹ We must therefore offer three accounts in parallel:

1. a PERSON-PERSON account.
2. a PERSON-THING-PERSON account, which is also a PERSON-WORLD-PERSON account.
3. a GOD-MAN-WORLD-CREATION-WORLD-MAN-GOD account.

The 'object' in the term GOD-OBJECT-GOD is the term GOD-WORLD-MAN, in which form God prepares us to take our place in the scheme MAN-CREATION-GOD. Ritschl D. *The Logic of Theology*, 151 complains that the development of a trinitarian doctrine of creation in terms of the threesome GOD-HUMANITY-NATURE and of new creation was supplanted by an Augustinian restriction of theology to God and humanity (or the soul). The 'Greek' person-person schema lacks a world, and remains ideational. With less than three terms, theology cannot remain theological.

One moment in our account of the speech of God must include the resistance met by the Word. This resistance is both *us*, the many, in our all reluctance, and it is the *opponent*, whose grip holds us bound as a single undifferentiated entity. The Word of God must break the grasp of this single opponent on us before we, the many, may even start to hear this Word for ourselves. All the would-be plurality of the world is sham, and serves only to produce a single homogenous entity that obliterates all particularity. It holds us captive. But it is our action that creates this captivity. The Word of God therefore addresses first two parties – Satan and his world; then three parties – Satan, the world and us, and finally, with the defeat of Satan, two parties again – the world and us. We can be distinguished from the world only when Satan is defeated, and he is beaten only when the world can be distinguished from us and we from it. Only then do we cease to be everything, and become instead creatures who are given our place by God.

6.3.2 Epistemology as political claim.

Kant did not concede that the Word is met by resistance. The limits he outlined for theology suppose that we are as individuals already able and ready to hear the Word of God and that the world is a place of peace in which every such claim can be freely heard and weighed. A trinitarian theology must meet this Kantian theology and anthropology with an account which says that the world must first be released from the grasp of this opponent. It must be released from the compulsion that creates this single demonic economy of being. This being must be addressed both as not yet one and as not yet many. The world is nothing but opposing forces, one outcome of which is that they enforce a premature unity and uniformity that prevents the emergence of the man and anthropology that Kant hopes for. This world declares itself one, complete and autonomous. The address of God interrupts this world, and reveals it to be not autonomous, inviolable or one.

The economy of modernity claims to be one, and to be one without God. It denies it hears or receives anything that is not itself. It therefore claims that the Word of God has given way to the secular word of man, and has been proved to be just one of its own many words. It is therefore not enough to talk as modern theology does only of God's Word, without going on to account for who can hear and receive this Word. It is in its reception and return that this Word becomes act and creates an economy of speech and action. We must account for the reception of God's Word in terms of the defeat and

re-deployment of other rival words. God is able to recover his Word from the world and from whatever interloper attempts to withhold it from him.

The world of the economy of modernity claims to be a single being, a *hen kai pan* and *deus sive natura*. This protological and monist world-claim demands that what knowledge we have of God meets the criterion it sets for certainty. It believes that we have God, as we have the world, without the mediation of God or any other creature, but as our pure object, passively and immediately before us. Modernity is an economy of vision based on a non-touch cosmology, according to which we are as serene and detached as Olympians, completely able to survey and command all that is. This claim is the result of a development in which criteria for knowledge of God became criteria for the knowledge of the world. God must first take away from us this world that we know unequivocally and immediately, in order that we are saved from becoming the totality we claim, and that the world is saved from us.

We need to indicate that this protology has its own history. It is itself a story. In the *Timaeus* and *Republic* Plato described a hierarchy of being, at the top of which were the Forms or Ideas, and at the bottom, the miasma of this life. In this cosmology the upper intellectual realm constitutes oneness as such. All that belongs to the intellect rises to this upper realm, while all materiality and formlessness sink down to form a morass without unity. The upper realm has all reality, action and unity; the lower reality has only the reality, action and unity which the upper realm lends it. In the *Timaeus* the two were indissolubly one cosmos, a totality in which the world and man and god together constituted a single divine being. Subsequent neoplatonic developments introduced more complex layers and ladders of intermediaries, a chain of being. Plato's was the most systematic version of the world's description of itself as this single being. It therefore rightly featured in the Christian account of the world, was responded to, condemned and corrected against the totality of Christian doctrine and the ongoing liturgical work of the Christian confession of the triune God who creates something that is not himself.

In the *Republic* the lower realm had a negative description as that which had no strong reality or unity. In the course of the philosophical tradition however, and particularly under the pressure of the positive Christian description of the world, this lower realm became the realm of experience and the empirical. In the medieval period, the vision of God was the purpose and object of all knowing. But with the loss of the liturgical mediation of knowledge that we discussed in 5.3, this object of our vision ceased to be the God who makes himself object for our sake. It became ever more firmly

the empirical object of the senses and the world, until the beatific vision became simply a vision of the world understood as an object that could play no part in our coming to know it. The upper realm was all form, number and oneness itself. But in the course of centuries of complex Christian and Islamic appropriation and development of neo-platonic and Aristotelian traditions, the lower realm came to take its definition from the upper. The result was that by the end of the seventeenth century what was empirical came to have an unproblematic oneness and unity. What was once the lower realm that had no unity, became the criterion of unity. As, with the decline of theological mediation, God became more distant and decreasingly the agent of his own mediation, the lower realm of the object of the senses loomed larger until it eclipsed the upper realm altogether. The upper realm disappeared *as realm*, but the tradition did not abandon this dualist up-and-down cosmology. Rather what had been the upper realm became *method*, the rule of the knowing subject. The world that corresponded to this subject became the criterion of oneness and certainty. Now the knowing subject represents the upper realm, while the world is no more than a reflection or hypostasis of the being of this demonic knowing subject.²²

The economy of modernity believes it knows its world. It admits to a theory of perception. It does not admit to an ontology. It believes it has left behind all questions of the mediation of being – that is of how to get from the lower sphere to the upper, from sense impressions to knowledge of unchanging forms and of divinity. It believes that it is post-metaphysical. But we can see that its very own *action* of knowing *is* that upper realm. It is that realm as *action*, rather than as object. As such the modern knowledge that sees through and pushes aside all mediation remains indissolubly part of the one indivisible cosmology in which the upper sphere knows - *intellects* - the lower. The modern epistemological constitution, far from being an escape from this dualist cosmology, is a continuation of it. Action, chief of which are *knowing* and *uniting*, continues to represent that upper realm. *Knowing* is the whole mode of action. The lower realm is defined as being quite without action and unity. Modern epistemology and cosmology is dualist. Yet, since it cannot concede that there is anything outside itself, it is monist.

Christian theology must respond to this metaphysics-become-epistemology. Theology requires a set of protocols which control the claims of knowledge. It identifies the claim to immediate knowledge as a theological claim, in the sense that the Platonic

²² It makes no difference whether we say that the world is the lower realm (object), and we (subject) are the upper realm that looks down on it, or whether we say that our knowing power (subjectivity) is the (hidden) basis and platform on which the world is present to us.

cosmology represents a presocratic *theology*. Christian theology must say that man does not know God where God does not give himself to be known. Equally importantly, it must say that man does not know the *world*, where God does not give the world to be known. This latter claim is missing from modern theology taken in by the mock modesty with which science has relinquished the claim to have knowledge of God for the apparently more limited claim to have knowledge of the world. Just as in the Platonic cosmology the intellect or sphere of theory knew and mastered the lower realm, so the modern practices of perception do not allow that anything could resist being known by the knowing subject. In Platonic cosmology the upper and lower realms made one cosmos and one being, so the knower is not finally different from what it knows. It is precisely this belief of the Western tradition, that it has, by its theory of perception, escaped ontology, that keeps the Western tradition firmly within this cosmology in which the divine *knows* the earthly and, by its being known, the earthly confirms this self-perception of the divine, and the two make a single entity and god.

The world we now claim to know makes a claim to unity that is derived from this protological ontology. The object status of the world is the reflection of our status as intellect and subject. We know the world because it is brought into being precisely by our knowing. We have a non-mediate knowledge of it. When the question of God is raised we seek a non-mediate knowledge of God as just another object-in-the-world. Does he have existence or give this sort of empirical evidence of himself?²³ The two spheres of the Intellect and Sense, now the Subject and his Object, have drawn the world into two poles and swept away all complexity and reciprocity of relation to leave a clear floor between them. The question of the otherness of God – of there being something outside this totality – has become only the question of our knowing and the perpetual labour of the confirmation of our status as subject. The subject of the economy of modernity does not accept external discipline or receive his place and purpose from others. He does not find them authoritative for saying who he is, for his inner self is prior to such an external world, and external restraint is inimical to his being. In this economy we are each of us a god and participate in the god.

The economy of modernity claims totality. This timeless being produces new social and ideological configurations but is itself unchanging. Its whole action effects to clear away a whole world of complexity and intermediate relations and replace it with a

²³ This basis is not true even of knowledge of things in the world. We have a use-knowledge of the things of the world, and this use-knowledge is the mode in which we may come to appreciate that the creatures of the creation of God have an existence independent of us.

concept of vision and immediacy. Theology must challenge this world and world-belief. Theology is a complex time-tensed account of the world, dualist in that it maintains a now and not yet, an account of two spheres, aeons or cities. It teaches that there are not two types of knowledge - taught (*doctrine*) and non-taught (*immediate*) knowledge, but that all knowledge is taught and mediated. It teaches that only God knows in the non-mediate non-taught way in which the economy of modernity assumes it knows.

The economy of modernity understands its whole action as the exercise of subjectivity and choice. From the correct belief that we can choose *which* persons and authorities to acknowledge, we have moved on to think we may choose whether or not to acknowledge others and their authority at all. Following the collapse of the complex medieval account of being and beings, a distinction arose between two sorts of knowing that distinguished between knowledge of the other mediated by the other, and immediate knowledge. On the one hand was *worship* - acknowledgement of the otherness of an other – and on the other *knowing* – objects, nature. This *distinction* became a *dichotomy*, of *worship* and *science*. It prevents us moderns from understanding our own action of knowing as a disguised form of worship. Nature is what moderns acknowledge as other, precisely as it is non-responsive. Our knowledge of it is not reciprocal and thus not mediated, and the modern personality is both threatened and secured by its utterly non-personal quality.

Modernity which does not acknowledge the many forms of being and otherness makes a fatally simple contrast between scientific and fideistic knowledge, between scientific and religious language. It believes that worship – respect of some givens, acknowledgement of something other – is an activity which is elective, and which we could refuse altogether to concede, if we wished. The manyness of these givens and others is not acknowledged as duty or task. Instead only two imperatives are recognised – the cultivation of one's own subjectivity, and the acknowledgement of nature necessary to allow the cultivation of that subjectivity. Modernity has wiped away the many intermediate worships by which we could acknowledge the otherness of others and return to each their specific and particular difference. By acknowledging no specific and particular others or givens we make ourselves indistinguishable from the totality and so demonic.

The triune God is social. He is in himself all sociality and otherness. He is already one and complete, without us. He can also therefore make others other, and make their otherness resistant to assimilation by us. Their status as his creatures prevents them from being the object called into being by our knowing. Confession of this triune God is

acknowledgement of his ability to make others other, and complete without us and apart from us, and thus it is the possibility of acknowledging the particular claims of others. We must look for the origins of this Kantian distinction between language and religious language. We can do this by recovering a complex ontology, epistemology and ethics all subject to the discipline of eschatology.

The One (*hen kai pan*) claims to be prior and basic, the source and arbitrator of manyness. The less public that claim is, and the less it appears as a theological or political claim to a *mon-archy*, the more determinative the One is. This One is most effectively total when it does not appear as one claim amongst others in the miasma of many words that overlie and conceal what timelessly is. The question of the One is the question of power. Who has power so securely that they can prevent the question of power from coming to public expression? Such a power is exercised by the subject of the economy of modernity. He effects to prevent the action of others, and prevent this from becoming explicit. He can remain innocent about his action and never understand that he creates the captivity in which others are bound, and he bound with them.

We need to think again about the relationship of unity and action. Aristotle understood that thinking remains in the service of action. Out of every action arise considerations of how to do better, and of which actions are better than others simply because they involve greater virtuosity. The end of all action is public life.²⁴ Our peers judge our action, and everything we do is directed to improving our performance before this public. Our action and theirs together serves to increase the total sociality. All action aims to grow the market of public and therefore political life. Aristotle realises that being must also mean action, and that there are different sorts of action over different periodicities. An account of action requires an account of the reciprocal relationship of action and the character and capabilities that enable it and derive from it. Action appears within a perichoretic hierarchy of action, good action, social action and politics. Part of the purpose of truth statements is to improve our performance, so we can make more and better truth statements. All speech and thought is for the sake of *doing*, and doing *better*, which means a more social and public doing. What we do determines what we want to do; it gives us our character, which in turn determines our desire. Action occurs

²⁴ For the argument that sociality is the highest goal of all our action, see Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1094a-96a. We prepared for this section in Chapters 2 and 5. Martha C. Nussbaum *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1994, and Pierre Hadot *Philosophy as a way of life* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1995 represent therapy as private practice. Richard Bodéüs *The Political Dimensions of Aristotle's Ethics* Albany: State University of New York Press 1993 and

in this series: action⁽¹⁾ → character → desire → action⁽²⁾. Here we have an antidote to the ontology described by Plato. This ontology is less adept at conceptualising change because it understands only that ideas belong to an upper realm of ideas, and that beneath them is just one form of being - *nature*. It is therefore also an antidote to the economy of modernity that is a function of this protology in which the manyness of ideas is mere appearance, beneath which all is really the same, not many but one.

6.4.1 Christianity as discipline.

We can now answer this question: What does the doctrine of God *do*? We can say that theological knowledge instructs us in the better performance of the worship of God, and that worship of the one God is the means to sociality. This exercise of the intellect is in the service of the growth of the Christian community elect to that doxological practice that witnesses to, and even begins to participate in, the real sociality of the Father and the Son. It allows us to see that any theological talk will dualise and separate the one creation of the one God into autonomous economies of upper and lower until it is controlled by another theological talk that understands thought to be in the service of the formation of the one action, sociality and body created by the Father and Son. One theological discourse must discipline another. Theology that does not challenge the priority of thought over action will accept the modern dichotomy of religious and non-religious knowledge, knowledge and faith, and be content meekly to occupy the house of private morality and spirituality that Kant awarded to religion.

The purpose of action is sociality and therefore politics. Civic or political philosophy assumes with Aristotle that man is intrinsically social, and that the achievement of more sophisticated sociality is the end and purpose of politics. It also provides a positive ethic. Moral philosophy on the other hand, the philosophy of the subject, is the philosophy of the individual who is defined in contrast to society, understands himself to be threatened by it, and requires a (negative) freedom from it, a formal ethic. It assumes that man is first natural and only subsequently and problematically social. Moral philosophy, as the philosophy of subjectivity, represents a giving up on life together, and so a failure of public and political life. It does not understand politics as sociality, hospitality and mutual formation, but as a technique for controlling the threat posed by other people. Kant believes in a self-imposed and self-

Wallach John R. *The Platonic Political Art A study of Critical Reason and Democracy* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press 2001 argue that this private practice is in the service of public life.

interpreted discipline, and rules out the discipline imposed by others. He allows public discourse no part in constituting our desires and character. Trinitarian theology understands that God is social in himself, and that his creatures, who receive all their definition from him, will become social. According to the economy of modernity we have to struggle alone to establish our *social being* on the basis of our *natural being*, because we are the functions of this *deus absconditus* called 'nature', that has abandoned us to sort out the problem of sociality in isolation.

If we accept the argument of Strauss and Hunter that the eighteenth century enlightenment represents a giving up on political enlightenment and the public sphere, what took its place? ²⁵ Schneewind shows that the public sphere was handed away by Shaftesbury, Hume and Smith to the discourse of passions and natures.²⁶ The discourse of withdrawal, Stoic and Epicurean *apatheia* and *akrasia*, became the mode of discourse of the public square. The language designed for retreat from public responsibility became the whole vocabulary of public responsibility. Economics became the mode of politics. Economics is a moral discourse disguised as a discussion of nature. The Stoic and Epicurean vocabulary of which it consists was expressly intended to justify flight from the world and to disable formative public choice. It is in Aristotle's sense profoundly anti-moral. It purports to be a form of talk about nature, a pure physics, but is rather the theology and politics of the protological ontology which understands the play of nature and passions merely as the miasma of plurality. I have argued that theology has to stay in discussion with Plato and Aristotle. Stoicism and Epicureanism represent a third and fourth discourse that Christian theology must also respond to. The Stoic and Epicurean *deus absconditus*, represented only by an empty space crossed by elements, or plenum filled by forces, does not interact or permit any world or history. All four ancient, or rather timeless, theologies must be challenged by the Christian doctrine of the triune God and the Christian practice of praying for release from these rivals.

6.4.2 The purpose of theological statement.

I have said that the world claims to be one, and that theology must show that it is many. But theology must also say that this manyness is no real plurality, but amounts just to that single entity, the world held by, and indistinguishable from, the opponent of God,

²⁵ Ian Hunter *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001, 25-8, and for Strauss see 5.5.

that is addressed and opposed by the Word of God.²⁷ The rival word of the economy of modernity resists being named and brought to the surface. We are dealing therefore not merely with ideas and ideologies, but with sets of movements with extremely long periodicities that determine the modality and effect of our action, by which our action functions to give away our particularity to a single being and entity. This demon may be so distant that he does not appear to be a discrete figure of a king or god, or so close that he is not separate from us but constitutes a single economy coincident with our whole world.

The modern anthropology is an ontology without account of time. It releases man from the tension between this world and the world to come and has made the transcendental city of *not yet* the basis for the present city of sure and certain knowledge of the world. He is already the man of 'not yet'. Kant has *solved* and dissolved what he took to be a problem, but should have taken to be a *task*. He understood time as problem and abolished it, so we live not between two times, but in a two-aspect space, in which the space of sensation is set within the space of intellect that must be presupposed in order that there be a space of sensation. The upper realm of the Timaeian cosmology has become the subjectivity, and thus the mastery, of the knower of the world.²⁸ The Kantian subject denies that the action of others constitutes his world. He intends his world to be an inert thing of nature, not a loud bustling place composed of many agents with which he is in an economy of response.²⁹ As long as this core claim of the priority of *nature* is not challenged, other disciplines subordinate themselves to the claim of economics to be the first science of being. An insufficiently trinitarian theology is always liable to become a vehicle for this protology, with the result that it becomes a religion of interiority that effects to hollow out public discourse. Theology is a mode of political hermeneutics, a practice of interrupting the simple statements the world makes about

²⁶ See Schneewind *The Invention of Autonomy* 171-83, 285-309, and Isabel Rivers *Reason, Grace and Sentiment: A study of the language of religion and ethics in England 1660-1780* Volume 2 *Shaftesbury to Hume* Cambridge 2000, 114-52 for discussion of this move to interiority.

²⁷ I said in the Introduction that we must give an account in which we are not distinguishable from the world or it from us and that this single entity that cannot sustain particularity or plurality, theology must conceptualise as 'the Opponent'. The Word of God opposes this entity and distinguishes and releases us from it.

²⁸ See Seung T.K. *Kant's Platonic Revolution in Moral and Political Philosophy* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press 1994. Farrow D. *Ascension and Ecclesia* Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1999, 168 argues that Kant represents a philosophical chiliasm (Kant's own description of Lessing) in the tradition of Joachim of Fiore, a fully realised eschatology and anthropology (and thus which is not eschatological at all) against which Foucault protested, see Chapter 1.

²⁹ We have discussed this economy of response in terms of Anselm's single fabric of being, of Janowski's 'Tun-ergehen Zusammenhang', and the affective continuum, that understands us to be not only actors but sufferers of the continuum of movement.

itself by which the world always seems to want to close itself down, and of providing complex statements that keep the world open. Theology is a work of intercession (*epiclesis*) or advocacy, of calling on the Holy Spirit to give the world more time. Theology is a mode of politics and Christianity the best mode of politics because the God of Jesus Christ is our ruler and under his rule we may flourish.

This requires several other claims. One is that Christians participate in the rule of the one ruler. Another is that political talk is inseparable from ethics talk, and ethics talk from political talk.³⁰ A third and larger claim must be made, one that was once a commonplace of Platonic philosophy. This is, that politics (the *polis*) and ethics (what to do) and psychology (talk of our soul, emotions and religious inclinations), and cosmology and theology, all relate one to another. These claims represent a range of tasks for theology. We will start with the first.

Christianity has taken up some of the resources of political thought provided by classical republicanism. For this vanished tradition the ruler does much more than rule: he is a model and a teacher, and the law is a resource of positive description of what is good.

I have distinguished between ideology that can be named and ideologies so successful and normative that they have ceased to be ideologies and have become modes of our action too mundane to be dignified with a name. Such actions hover beneath the threshold of our intellectual attention and inveigle their way into us so that they became the only thing we can do, creating self-reinforcing circles of action that we cannot escape. We do not think them, we *do* them. If we cannot escape them, they may be said to have a demonic character, and then we can say that it is not we who do these actions but they do us. They determine our action, while giving us the illusion of freedom. Without the conceptual means to distance ourselves from them, they are all we can do. It is the task of Christian theology to render these practices visible for the first time. Politics is therefore the bringing up to the surface, to publicly responsible discourse, all those nameless practices in which our modern normality consists. Politics is therefore not one domain amongst others, but the task of naming the powers and constraints that operate on us, because we operate them on one another. It is our task to drag the hidden and constrained up into the publicly responsible discourse of voluntarism and will, politics and ethics. It is our task to name the powers. Then we can, for the first time, exercise our will and approve or repent of them. Only Christian theological statement about the

victory of Christ can do this, the first task of politics. It can do this because it talks about our captivity and bondage, and it is able to do so because it witnesses to a captivity brought to an end. The end of this captive mind is the beginning of a free and public action – politics – in Christ.

We are therefore wrong to protest that we do not hold power unless we are elected to it. All of us already wield power over one another. The purpose of the Christian concept of sin is to winkle us out from behind our declaration of our innocently non-political status. Theology has to show that it is no one other than ourselves who, by myriad everyday acts, create complexes of action, vocabulary, rules and institutions which allow certain forms of behaviour and inhibit others and so enforce on others modes of personhood. When these modes give rise to forms of agency not under authority, they exert a stolen but real power that enforces crushingly sub-human forms of personhood. Those crushed by them may properly identify such modes as false gods and ask for their release: they can even in the name of the God of Israel address them as demons and have them driven out. Theology is therefore first interested in flushing out the rulers and authorities of this age from their cover in the mundane imperatives of modern men. It is not Caesar who is the enemy, for behind this or that political regime is an amorphous collective that refuses authority. Behind this figure is nothing other than disobedient Adam, the sum of our own recalcitrance, that originates not in individuals but in long generations and traditions and so in humanity as a whole. The purpose of all talk of rule is to show that we are the ruler who is dethroned. The purpose of the doctrine of God is to confess that we are not God, and to put in our hands the means to call him.

Theology is not Christian theology until it can give some account of the bound and involuntary situation of man. Satan must be named and thrown out before man becomes free enough even to hear the word of God. It is crucial to the health of the university that it admits discussion of the recalcitrance and deviousness that form the context of our knowing. Christian theology must represent publicly the closedness of human knowing that is intrinsic to the real complexity of human motivation, a complexity that the concept of the individual disallows. Christian theology must exercise a proper scepticism about the world and about man. It must ask whether it is we moderns who are *ever hearing but never understanding, and ever seeing but never perceiving*. We have true knowledge of the world because a good God has made a creation that is good

³⁰ O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* gives a historical sketch of the political framework as preparation

for us, not deceptive - *what may be known about God is plain to them since God has made it plain to them*. But this requires a moment in which we are disciplined and warned, and when this warning is not heard our thinking becomes futile, our minds are darkened so that, since we have not thought it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he has given us over to a depraved mind, with the result that nothing is plain to us. The oppressive unchallenged assumption of modern theology is that we already have a free and mature mind and are already entirely capable of choice. It is not true, and it is not merciful to insist it is.

We must emphasise the *intrinsically* political purpose of the doctrine of God. We need to show that it is not enough that theology talks as though the human already had a will and freedom – the discourse of voluntarism. It must also talk about the absence of will and the captivity of will – the discourse of sloth, compulsion and delusion. We must recover from non-modern Christian theology the resources to talk about a will and freedom that may come into being as a result of Christ's victory. We must learn from it how to name the powers and so proclaim faithfully a liberating gospel of the defeat of the usurper and the rule of the one God.

In order to bring the whole world into the domain of existing political discourse there must therefore be at least three accounts. In one of them (1) we are victims, in another (2) we are masters and, as the mode of our mastery (3) we play the bystander. In this third account we abjure public and political responsibility to conceal ourselves behind complex ideological constructions about the constraints on us. We disguise ourselves as victims better to promote our claim to autonomy. But this is only an apparent autonomy, for in it we are caught trying to carry off an unsustainable claim. Our task then is to reintroduce political discourse where it has been squeezed out, and we do this by arguing from the first theologically. Theology is the politics that says that God is king, that there is authority that is given, external to us. Recognition of this authority is the beginning of our politics and the possibility of public well-being. God-talk is given to the Christian community in order that this community prevent the world from making hubristic anthropological claims. Theology is the control on the discourse of anthropology. It tells us that we do not know man, that man is not ours but the possession and work and secret of God. Only a long, slow lesson from God and about God will provide us with any information about man who is the creature of God. We may come to know others only as they are entrusted to us, given to us on leasehold and

for an ethics that is to follow. I am presenting politics and ethics together.

we are responsible to God for their well-being. When we fail to know them in this custodial way they are taken away from us and protected from us. Social science can only make an ideological claim which effects to create the creature it claims to know: it cannot recognise anything that is not a function of its own projection, and thus it is not able to know any creature at all. Christian theology says that God has made himself available to us to appeal to. Only in Christian speech is there a figure who is available to us as object of knowledge because he gives himself to be known, while utterly unknown and uncomprehended by us and who, in all our knowledge of him, remains the master. Only this theological discourse removes from us all our modern pretension not to be implicate in any form of authority of others, the better secretly to keep in play our claim to be master.

6.5.1 God is king and judge.

The Christian gospel announces that God is King, Jesus is Lord. Talk about God is our response to the declaration by the God of Israel of his kingship: he is the ruler of our rulers, and he is our ruler. That is to say that his rule over us is both mediated by intermediary holders of power, and is immediate. His word, and that of his body that participates in it, warns the rulers and political authorities that their authority is held from God, and will be assessed by him. The Word of God declares war on authorities that do not acknowledge the kingship of God. Theology obedient to this word must be done in the face of those political authorities, and often against their resistance.³¹ We have to go out to name those illegitimate entities, centres of authority and modes of personhood that exercise a hidden power over us. These are then cosmological-political authorities – the spirit of this world and rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. They represent the cosmological consequences of the failure of Adam to take up the office of stewardship given him, and his resultant failure to keep the power and energies of the cosmos in their proper order. This cosmological language represents the consequences of the sloth of humanity that has as yet no will.³²

God is king and God is judge alone. God liberates us from the temptation to be our own judges and masters. Because God holds these offices exclusively we cannot

³¹ O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 93 seems to contrast political and cosmological ('Jesus' preference for addressing the demonic rather than the colonial oppressors...') but the point is rather that many of these authorities are not yet visible in any realm of political discourse – and must be named and called to account by public and therefore prophetic theological statement.

seize and hold them ourselves.³³ We are free from the compulsion to rule and exert an absolute and tyrannical power. That God alone is judge over us is the guarantee that there will be justice, both for us and also for those who have been denied justice by us. Critics of the forensic atonement have asked by what right God brings us to court to try us as sinners. But it is we who have exerted our right against each other, and against God, in an all-against-all, in a competitive open field. This field is the assembly in which not only every agent puts himself forward, but every agent is there to judge between every other, and deny them all what he awards to himself. This assembly is a court in which each attempts to give judgment and vindicate his own right, appealing to all others to do so whilst simultaneously attempting to deny them the right to oppose his own claim.³⁴ We are in the assembly by the very action of our own self-promotion. It is this that makes the assembly a court in which our right and rule is tried: we put ourselves there by intending to exert a rule over all others.³⁵

But such a statement, that God alone is judge, is not sufficient. God does not intend to be alone in exercising judgement and authority. He intends that we also come to learn this action and exercise it with him and under him. He intends that we come to find his action good, to be informed by it and come to share it. The end and purpose of his judging is that he brings us up into the office and work of judges. God gives us an action. It is an action that is intrinsically his and which will always remain his, yet which he does not will to be his such that it is not also ours. This new action must be understood both as servanthood and as leadership. We must understand this not only as an action given, but also as an action only loaned to us, held by us only as long as we exercise it with him and under him. In the event that we do not grow into its proper use,

³² The writer of the letter to the Ephesians 2.2 mentions ‘the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air’ and 3.10 ‘rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.’ Philo mentions *logoi, aretai, angeloi, daimones, psuchai, ideai, eikones, sphragides, paradeigmata*.

³³ O’Donovan O. & O’Donovan J.L. *Irenaeus to Grotius* 14 quote Theophilus of Antioch making this point in ‘To Autolycus’: ‘Accordingly, I will pay honour to the emperor not by worshiping him but by praying for him. I worship God who is the real and true God, since I know that the emperor was made by him. You will say to me ‘Why do you not worship the emperor?’ Because he was made not to be worshipped but to be honoured with legitimate honour. He is not God but a man appointed by God, not to be worshipped but to judge justly. For in a certain way he has been ‘entrusted with a stewardship’ (1 Cor 9.17) from God. He has subordinates whom he does not permit to be called emperors, for ‘emperor’ is his name and it is not right for another to be given this title. Similarly worship must be given to God alone.’

³⁴ This argument is made by Rose *Dialectic of Nihilism: Post-Structuralism and Law* 11-15.

³⁵ The modern division and separation of powers distinguishes the law-court from a (parliamentary) assembly, and these from the more obvious contest of the marketplace or battlefield. Isaiah 2.13-14 *The Lord takes his place in court; he rises to judge peoples. The Lord brings an indictment*. We are in court because we are in an assembly in which all nations, regimes and rulers assert themselves over all others, and over the God of Israel. O’Donovan’s *Christus Victor* theology shows that the medium is initially in our possession, but Christ commandeers it and transforms it into his medium – for us. As such it is a demonstratively non-modern theology: it does not allow an epistemology to function in ignorance of the doctrine of God.

he takes it away from us again, and the shreds of what we learned remain only to baffle us and make us believe we know something when we know nothing.

The rule of the people of God - the Christian commonwealth.

God intends to admit new members to the council and assembly of heaven.³⁶ This assembly will then govern a combined kingdom of heaven and earth, in which we will be not divine, but for the first time properly human, creatures made holy.³⁷ This assembly is gathered as an earthly ecclesia that inducts its members into the skill of judging. Part of the skill of judging is the skill of advocacy, the office of defence counsel, that puts the case for mercy. These trainee judges – the saints – must be taught the skills of entering a plea, interceding, *prayer*. They must learn to argue on behalf of those who are not yet holy that a little more time is needed, and on behalf of the oppressed to argue that their release come now. They must be able to say ‘Have mercy on us – give us a little more time’, and ‘Come Lord Jesus – give no more time to the oppressors’. These advocates must be able to say which plea is at any time appropriate. The new Christian action is that of the members of the assembly that God gathers around himself.³⁸ This training starts as the exercise of self-government of the Church.³⁹ The people of the world will come to this assembly of saints for justice.

Christians are elect to serve and to take care of the world entrusted to them. They are to exercise oversight. They are to put the case to the Lord their God for mercy and justice, and together pray to him to exercise the power of binding and loosing.⁴⁰ The Christians are held responsible for *the least of these*, and are subject to a more severe judgement when they lose even one of them.⁴¹ The whole Christian body is elect to this

³⁶ Miller P.D. ‘Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as a Cosmic-Political Symbol’ in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 2000, 425-440.

³⁷ I am not in favour of the language of deification that for example Marshall tolerates in ‘Justification as Declaration and Deification’ *International Journal for Systematic Theology* 4.1 2001, 3-28.

³⁸ In Mark 6.7 the disciples are appointed the judges of the twelve tribes of Israel, and in Mark 11.17 (Isaiah 56.6-8) Israel is the judge of the earth who brings justice for the nations. Jeremy Thomson ‘The Conflict-Resolving Church’ 113, 193-6, argues, in agreement with Yoder, that the Church must regard these instruments of judgment and discipline as Caesar’s and not employ them. In reply we can say that courts are not bound to be the wicked instruments of a wicked Caesar or Constantinianism. But even when they are this, we are told in Romans 13 that we are to take advantage of the discipline lashed out on us by God’s (unrighteous) servant by understanding it as God’s discipline for our benefit. It is no concern of ours that this servant will also receive his discipline from God for over-stepping the mark.

³⁹ O’Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* argues in his Chapter 5 that the Church’ is (1) a gathering community (2) a suffering community (3) a glad community and (4) a community that speaks the words of God. It is prophetic in that it addresses the world, and its speech includes prayer (petition) and laying on of hands.

⁴⁰ Matthew 16.18, 18.19.

⁴¹ Paul for example is able to say in Acts 18.6 that he is clear of his responsibility and that the blood of his listeners is therefore upon their own heads. He declares 20.24-26 that he is ‘innocent of the blood of all men’ because he has completed ‘the task the Lord Jesus has given’ him.

work.⁴² But of course the Christian body is not yet obediently at work. Teaching and leadership must presently be limited to those appointed specifically to teach and prepare others. The only purpose of the appointment of some to particular offices in the church is to prepare the whole church to exercise this single office. When Christ is all in all even the most modest members will be made able to play their part and receive their proper honour.⁴³ In the same way, authority in the Church is in the service of the Church's authority over the world. It is to participate in its Lord's work of releasing the world from all the alien authorities – other gods – that presently divide and hold it captive. All Christians are members of this parliamentary and juridical assembly which speaks the truth, teaches and enables truthful public speech, practises justice and praises God for his justice. All are citizens in a commonwealth in which all will grow up to the fullness of Christ.

The ecclesia is the body responsible for the education and sanctification of this community, and through this community of the world. It nurtures and is nurtured by a body of tradition from which it creates legislation, and assembles as a law-court which judges individual hard cases. Right-judging and right-doing is the proper action of the new people. It involves coaching them in the action of right speech and public speech. They see God judges rightly and they say so: they learn to praise God for the generosity and finesse of his practice of justice. The Christian community is being trained up to a range of offices that serve a single end. The singleness of this end, and the oneness of this assembly, offends the separation of powers that under the modern constitution are understood to be incompatible.⁴⁴

⁴² 1 Corinthians 12.4-11, 28. 'There are different kinds of service but the same Lord. To this end God has appointed first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles.'

⁴³ 1 Corinthians 12.24 'But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it.' 15.35 'With what kind (part) of body would they come?' 15.42 'The body that is sown is perishable (because it is a part), it is raised imperishable (because it is a part integrated into the whole)..it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.'

⁴⁴ Bernd Wannenwetsch 'The political worship of the Church' *Modern Theology* 12 1996, 278 argues that the Church's worship of God is the overcoming of political antinomies, the most important of which is that between public and private, *polis* and *oikos*. Plato and Aristotle understood politics to be based upon the distinction of public and private: in the *polis* the free rich male citizen can find the fulfilment of his life, whereas the *oikos*, though necessary for the *polis*, is the realm of (unfree) labour and the maintenance of the means of life. 'Thus the concept of politics is highly exclusive and parasitic, resting on the basis of the *oikos*, which is at the same time conceived and dismissed as a restricted area for lower human beings such as women, slaves, artists and so on.' 279 He argues that 'The first important political impact of the new evolving Christian community was the de-totalising of politics.' This brought to an end the exclusion of the *oikos* and realm of nature from the *polis*. 'The first urban Christians described their common life not only in terms of family language (as was usual for religious communities) but also in terms of political language.' 'The Church's 'self-designation as *ekklesia* associates the original Greek political meaning of the notion as the voting assembly of a polis'. 'Worship includes in full participation all the representatives of the debased *oikos*: women, slaves, children and so on.' Hütter R. *Suffering Divine Things* 147-70, especially 163-4 'Church as 'polis' and 'oikos'.' Milbank *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* Oxford: Blackwell 1990, 432

Leadership of the project of the formation of a people is the proper work of the Christian community.⁴⁵ The Church may identify and address leaders as leaders, regardless of the legitimacy with which they are understood to have come to such position. They can address anyone as a leader even though such a person may protest that they hold no formal position and cannot be held to account. Leaders must be held to this paediatric task of nurturing law and public discourse to educate this people. They must be criticised in particular when they do not give a lead. The Church must, therefore, not give up on the state. It must model the lead that the state must give to the people, and model the openness of public political discourse. It does not long to take away the task of ruling from the state, to do it better, but always to encourage leadership, on such a broad definition, to grow in confidence and competence.

6.5.2 Theological response to the modern separation of powers.

The Christian political tradition represents one side of a conversation. The gospel is in conversation and confrontation with pagan thought. Modernity is pagan, and pagan thought must be the other half of the conversation – or rather not pagan thought but pagan *practice*, the practices of captivity, sloth and compulsion. Pagan practice cannot be opened to us by pagan thought alone. Rather it is only the scriptures of Israel that can reveal pagan thought to us as pagan, as that which is present temptation to us, and indeed as our own present practice. The bible is not the scriptures of the West, but of the Church, and the Church is only the leaven of the West, not the West itself. The Church is the secret that God holds hidden from the world.

The pagan practices most constitutive for modernity are represented by the political philosophy of the ancient world rediscovered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which Kant formalised into the modern political-and-epistemological separation of powers. This is the effective scripture of the modern West. It has brought

‘The church did not succeed in displacing politics ‘and as a result politics returned, yet in a virulent form unknown to antiquity.’

⁴⁵ O’Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 26 replies to the charge that such Christian leadership would be not only Christendom but Constantinianism, the exercise of an utterly illegitimate authority. In Wyclif and the Franciscan poverty tradition O’Donovan has found a non-Constantinian definition of authority and dominion. 16 In this tradition ‘Human justice depends upon God’s sanctifying of our relations to material possessions. Political right must spring directly from the charity to God and neighbour which the gospel imparts; *ius* must flow from the fountain-head of *iustitia*. Only the righteous (elect, forgiven, sanctified) can have a full title to ‘dominion’ - a word, which in the manner of the period, embraces the two notions of property and jurisdiction.’ Only the righteous can hold property Wyclif argues: thus they do not hold it so much as hold it in trust, employ it for another. We can therefore say that any possession and any right to exercise leadership is entirely a spiritual possession and right. This possession and remains that of the Spirit,

about the division and reduction of public discourse into the techniques of our withdrawal into ever smaller spheres of selfhood. The West attempts to lay aside the tools by which the canonical status of its own history can be reversed. We must ask whether in response God has withdrawn the scriptures from the West, with the result that the bible is quite closed to us, held closed by God. Yet the Christian work is, by use of the bible as diagnostic political instrument, to re-reveal to the West its intellectual sources and with them to challenge the practices that, by the endless process of division driven by the modern separation of powers, seek to stay invisible and normative. Now we can relate the political to the epistemological, to link the defeat and dethronement of the usurper-judge to the commissioning of the creature who participates in the justice-giving action of God. We can link the defeat and dethronement of the autonomous knower to a new licensing and empowerment of an obedient creaturely knowing.

6.5.3 Political theology and philosophy.

Other than by the mediation of God, not only is knowledge of *God* not attainable; knowledge of the *world of God's creation* is not knowable. It is his and not ours. It takes a long course of education even to come to realise the difficulty of acquiring knowledge of this world. There are plenty of resources for the conceptualisation of this difficulty and of the task of the purifications required by this course of education.⁴⁶ Plato offers a course of education which aims to teach us that we do not know what moderns are sure they do know. He teaches that we must start to step out of such knowledge and divest ourselves of such worldly wisdom. The early part of the philosophical life teaches us to re-examine what we are too certain of. The Socratic or Platonic education prescribes instrumental action that has to be adopted in order to begin to sense the barriers there are between us and true knowledge so that we are no longer under the dictatorship of a mere world view.

The political philosophy of the *Laws* of Plato demands that all citizens are taught and monthly rehearse their laws and constitution.⁴⁷ Athenians are free because they are under law. They do not suffer the alien authority of dictatorship because they obey this

and he can withdraw it from his ministers. God can remove the authority extended to us, and he can do this without our noticing, to leave us with nothing.

⁴⁶ See Seth Bernadete *Plato's 'Laws': The Discovery of Being* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2000, 42-53 for a recent exposition of the epistemology that belongs to Plato's political philosophy.

⁴⁷ Plato *Minos* and *Laws*. We need not democracy (for the demos is the mob) but nomocracy. *Menexenus* 238c (954) 'For a polity moulds its people; a goodly one moulds good men, the opposite bad. Therefore I must show that our ancestors were moulded in a good polity, thanks to which they and the present generation – amongst them these men who have died - are good men.'

intrinsic authority. Philo of Alexandria points out that Jews already do this every seventh day. On the Sabbath they read, learn and rehearse their constitution and law. Their law includes a definition of the full status of a man very like the one Aristotle sets out in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. By learning it they have become a people of great virtue, who exhibit the self-control that is the basis of all life in a *polis* and which the Greeks wish to emulate.⁴⁸ They know that the law intends first to *teach*. It is a bank of resources of description of the good, and only subsequently for the adjudication of what is good in each case. Without such a resource of description – and without the cultivation and care this resource requires – we have no means of saying what particular thing we want and will be satisfied by. In the original republican tradition we find that generosity is the defining characteristic of the justice or righteousness of the great man. The modern definition of justice is negative: it involves not getting in another man's way and making restitution when you do. The positive classical definition of justice involves giving the other man your wisdom, encouragement and support. Such a benefactor must act with the same generosity as the gods, giving rulings, counsel, instruction and justice. Justice-giving is a mercy.⁴⁹ He is not to leave his people idle and listless but must share out offices and give them work to do. All this extra-large definition of justice is part of the generosity of the man brought into being by the law and by vigorous public contest of the good.

6.6 The two economies.

This brief discussion of *paideia* and Platonic political philosophy has prepared us for the argument of Augustine in *The City of God*. Augustine is responding to Cicero's *De Re Publica*.⁵⁰ Cicero believes that the *res publica*, public affairs, are the affairs of the people, and that where there is no justice, the virtue which must underpin all fair dealing in society, there can be no law or right (*ius*); where there is no law, there is no common interest, no commonwealth, and a rabble, but no people. Cicero says that the tyrant is a model of the vice of injustice, of being above the law, lawless. Such a leader cannot be a model of justice. Under him there can be no just society or politics. The very existence

⁴⁸ See Philo *Life of Moses* 2.2, 2.5, 2.187 on the philosopher-king who is a shepherd of his people (1.150). His subjects imitate him. The shepherd and horticultural analogies are commonplace in ancient political thought.

⁴⁹ See for example Seneca *De Clementia* 1.5.7 and *De Beneficiis* 3.18.1, 4.12.5.

⁵⁰ See Schofield 'Epilogue' in Rowe & Schofield *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, 666-671, and O'Donovan *Irenaeus to Grotius* 161-163.

of the community, is made impossible.⁵¹ Cicero argues that in its earliest days Rome met the criterion of agreement on justice. Augustine disagrees.⁵² True justice did not flourish in Rome's heroic days because Rome worshipped many gods and thus many incompatible accounts of virtue, right and justice. So, following Cicero's argument, there was no community agreement on justice, and thus no justice. Only God's nation, the *polis* that rules and combines heaven and earth, counts as a people in Cicero's sense, for only in this heavenly city is there the agreement, and obedience to it, which underpins justice.⁵³ This, argues Augustine, makes the heavenly city a *better* community.

Augustine argues that the church is the nation, the exemplary nation, the model for all other nations.⁵⁴ We should not let 'nation' be defined as it has been in the modern period by territoriality, but must understand the concept of nation to refer to a particular regimen and form of life. So, for example, the nation and regimen of industrialists overlaps to some degree with that of financiers and with that of opinion-makers: each such mode of sociality is supported by sets of codes, practices and disciplines. All members of each fraternity have an idea of what its members do and do not do. Inasmuch as modern political science does not understand that nations compete for intellectual resources in the form of definitions of what is desirable, it rules out discussion of what *is* worth doing. It has not appreciated that we are all driven to seek what is better as present public discourse – 'earthly glory' – believes it is better, and that everyone has some idea of what it is to be successful and, within the context of earthly glory, can usually tell a better performance from a poorer one. Augustine says that being a member of any nation or regime demands constant re-appraisal of precisely which virtues are worth pursuing, and which should be discarded in order that some of these virtues really are attained. His definition of a regime does not require that we already agree on what is good, or insist, as Cicero and Kant do, that we must make the move that, because I think it is good for me, I must be asserting that it is good for everyone.⁵⁵ Augustine starts from the assumption that we all compete. We pursue glory. Then he refers to the retrospective discovery that heavenly glory is better than earthly glory, not least because it lasts longer. This may be hidden to everyone on earth because on earth

⁵¹ Cicero *De Re Publica* 3.43 Cicero *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws* edited by James E.G. Zetzel Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999, 75.

⁵² Augustine *City of God* 19.21 translated H. Bettenson, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1984, 881.

⁵³ Augustine *City of God* 19.24, Penguin 890.

⁵⁴ Augustine *City of God* 19.17, Penguin 877.

⁵⁵ Kant's categorical imperative (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 4.421 'Act only in such a way that you can at the same time will that your maxim should become a universal law') was first Cicero's *De Officiis* 3.26-7,52.

the effort of competing for earthly glory does not allow us to see that there is a better nation – and in it superior glory – available to us in the kingdom that unites earth to heaven. Augustine’s political philosophy relies on eschatology because this enables a more consistent pursuit of the logic of political philosophy.

Augustine contrasts two regimes and modes of being human. These are in themselves definitions of what it is to be human, and they are training regimes that intend to develop each of us to the full status of that mode. Augustine is contrasting two modes – a short-term mode and a long-term, or rather eternal, mode. There is nothing wrong with the short-term mode, other than that it is partial and eventually comes to an end. That there is an endless variety of short term modes is a good thing. The eternal mode is full, perfect, and does not come to an end. Indeed it is this mode that supplies life to the short term modes, did they but know it. Only those who participate in the eternal mode can see that all others are merely partial. With very great caution they can say that the partial forms can be seen, by the pure man only, as anticipations of, and witnesses to, the complete form. These (pagan) training regimes intend to improve our performance at acquiring a range of goods. They constitute so many wonderful ways of failing to get started on the process of learning the (heavenly) mode. But only retrospectively can it be seen – by the new mind – that all (pagan) modes were poor modes of what God does perfectly for us, and which the gospel is witness of. At a conceptual level at least, there is a recognition that Christianity and paganism – that is all men – are aiming at one thing. They are aiming at how to be a man. Christianity, Augustine argues, shows that the way to be a man is to be a son of the God of Jesus Christ. It not only shows this, but brings it about, through participation in the Spirit who brings such sons into being. To this end Christianity commandeers and discards all other regimes. All kingdoms claim some small share of earth, but one kingdom, that of God, comprises the whole of earth and heaven in a single combined regime. Buy into this kingdom and you will inherit the best of the rest anyway. All other nations don’t know what hope is because they cannot conceive of taking us further than the best of mankind already is. Christianity however intends to take us way beyond what already is, to God. This, for Augustine, is political philosophy on theological definition. It is political philosophy done properly.

A people is a people because they have a unity. But they do not bestow this unity on themselves. Their unity comes from outside them, from God. If they are just a *demos* without law, then they are a rabble not a people, each seeking to make himself the one

who is over all others. Not until this people are ruled by the theological monarchy of one God can there really be a *demos*, democracy and *koinonia*.⁵⁶ Christianity is the better way to do politics. It is a better performance, that marks all other ways as self-defeating by raising the definition of politics to life with God in this God's Spirit.

From Platonism we learn that absolutely nothing of the fullness of this world as the creation of God is available to us from the impressions of our senses. Without being tutored by the teacher we can only be oblivious to the fullness of this world, and exist in an infinitely impoverished version of it. Plato said we have fallen into a deep crevasse in which we have only very poor refractions of a reality far above us.⁵⁷ Down here we suffer from a reality deficit. By a process of *paideia* some few of us can return to that reality, learn it and come back to educate the rest of us in it. Christianity says that one man has been raised from the cave, and has come back to us. He has come back as the Spirit, that is, in many gentle modes that I have called law (instruction) and teacher, and the many other material modes that I discussed in Chapter 4. Strauss argued that modernity had abolished the metaphysics of the good and the project of *paideia*, but held onto criticism, which now functions as a vicious practice of disowning all resources of tradition and law.

So now we can say that what is significant about modernity is not that modern man has turned away from God, but that his turning away has been commandeered by God and made into God's action, so that even in his turning away man's action is taken from him and turned to his own eventual good. Just where man believes that he has succeeded in being most his own man, and is on the point of becoming Satan, his ambition is prevented. Modernity is an aeon which suffers from a deficiency of reality. It is just not very real. It has been put into receivership, but the receiver is keeping it ticking over by short-term loans of reality. It has become, despite itself, just a front for the purposes of God. God has made modernity an instrument of his mercy – albeit that for the sake of his own safety this must be kept well hidden from every modern.⁵⁸

⁵⁶See Augustine *City of God* Book 19.14 'The order and law, earthly or heavenly, by which government serves the interests of human society.'

⁵⁷ See Plato *Phaedo* 111c-114c; *Republic* books 6-7.

⁵⁸ We can therefore argue that the term 'modernity' only has meaning in theological statement. O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations* 57 argues that theology invented the concept of the state as a local area of *paideutic* performance requiring leadership with which the Church must stand in conversation and confrontation.

6.7 The variety of theological tasks.

We have now made plain the political character of the immediate epistemological claim of modernity. We have gathered resources to ask whether the turn from Christianity towards other options, is accompanied by God's turning and hiding his face from us, and so is the result not only of our failure, but of a failure that God has inflicted on us. The Christians must be able to pass this judgment of modernity on to modernity, or they will suffer the punishment due to modernity. But the Church has failed to take up its role as watchman, and so the indivisible witness to the indivisible God has been unaccountably divided between the several jurisdictions set out under the modern separation of powers which declares that religion is not politics. This judgement that the Church has failed to pronounce on the West, the Western Church is itself now suffering. The secularisation thesis must be countered by the theological caution that the God of Israel does not intend this generation to hear him, so does not say anything it can hear. We have hardened our hearts, with the consequence that he has hardened our hearts.

I have argued that re-stating the public and political purpose of the doctrine of God is not about recommending a particular political constitution. It is about insisting on the complexity of theological statement in which several accounts are kept in parallel. Which account has to be given now depends on the particular predicament of the world, to which the Church must respond with harder or softer judgment. We must say that the being that resists the Word of God is nothing but the product of our own action. The division of this being into the two economies of nature and will is the whole precept of modernity. It claims that once payment has been made to the first economy of nature, we are free to enter the second of absolute freedom. We pay what necessity demands, and are then quite free. We have seen that the possibility of restricting and excluding some choices is the basis of real choice. This second economy of utter and indeterminate freedom has no memory and allows for no growth of character. It believes that religious discourse is a voluntary and inexplicable binding of ourselves when we could and should be utterly free, and, further, that acknowledgement of difference – which I have called *worship* – is an elective matter, which we should avoid and which only religious people unaccountably take on. But every member of the economy of modernity is engaged in paying worship to unfreedom – necessity – in order briefly to enter the economy of freedom understood to lie behind it. This division between two economies divides us again between each of the proliferating jurisdictions created by this dialectic of nature and absolute freedom.

In this regime of the autonomous jurisdictions of economics, politics, culture, psychology and the still deeper recesses of subjectivity, we have no responsibility for the formation of the subjectivity of the other. We owe merely a general and formal duty not to make any positive or paideutic claims, or to teach or participate in the other. This regime makes *choice* the first and most binding imperative. However without a set of publicly-arrived at skills and criteria for the prioritising and formation of choices, such choice represents only *absence* of choice. Without this discourse our claim to subjectivity is unchallenged. By definition it represents opposition to the whole discourse and vocabulary within which the acknowledgement and prioritisation of any otherness may be made, and any explicit and local claims could be heard as address and obligation. When we have absolutised choice we never have to hear any specific claims. Culture – which is a discourse of will – is the whole vocabulary of the economy of modernity. Culture means characterless unbounded choice, that does not foreclose on any other choice, and so is as easily reversed as made. Plato insisted that some will rule over others. These others will then at least have the dignity of having a ruler to blame. His dominion, our subordination and this hierarchy of being is the outcome of all our *doing*. But Kant wants to go much further than Plato and say that we may all be a ruler, all autonomous. Kant therefore represents the hubris and collapse of this hierarchy. By denying that there is any status differential, this arrangement now appears not as top-down but everywhere alike. It is everywhere, and no longer *appears* anywhere, with the result that the hierarchy is hidden. We are entirely complicit in this arrangement. We cannot therefore say that we wish to be other than it, and cannot therefore shake our fist at it or plead to be released from it.

All the plurality and culture open to us in this economy represent a celebration of our absolute will and subjectivity which leaves us without the means to acknowledge any other world not made by this will and subjectivity. Our autarchy and totality would be threatened by the existence of any other economies of being.⁵⁹ We say there is no God, and there is no issue of ‘God’ because we ourselves are that god. Our enlightenment is only complicity to conceal the discourse of protest by which we could be dethroned, freed and transformed from a demonic to a creaturely status. This is the reason for acknowledging the claims of other systems that represent other forms of being, other

⁵⁹ Loughlin ‘The Basis and Authority of Doctrine’ 42 argues that ‘It is a paradox of postmodern culture that its pluralism obscures a deep homogeneity: a universal reason no less socially constructed and rhetorically maintained than those supposedly overcome, yet more insidious and ferocious because the condition of the very pleasures of postmodern pluralistic society. This “reason” is the material law of the market-place, predicated upon the metaphysical concept of the Void.’

priorities and thus other 'gods'. The economy of modernity has given up the apparatus by which we could name or recognise anything that could dethrone us and distinguish us from the demonic totality claimed by the economy of our action.

The economy of modernity is the function of an anonymous high god who does not intend to save us from being the prey of the contending jurisdictions. The oneness of this One allows a merely apparent manyness and so a merely apparent politics that will eventually be taken away by the reversion to oneness. This manyness is only the play of the natures and passions and the miasma of plurality. Recovery of the conceptual possibility that there may really be many gods, authorities, priorities, demands, creatures and worlds is necessary to rid us of this totalitarian monism. It is the contribution of trinitarian theology to allow us to say that *one* is what the Father and the Son are. Oneness is exclusively their characteristic, and making their creatures one and one with themselves, is what the Father and Son do. The oneness and manyness of the trinitarian God is the guarantee of the possibility that sociality, public life and politics constitute a real, and not merely a temporary and ultimately illusory, manyness.

We must therefore say both that the world is many, and that it is one. It is one over and against us, and hold us captive. And worse still, we are one with it and complicit in this captivity. By declaring that we are held in bonds, the Christian gospel holds out the hope that we can be distinguished from these bonds and that we will be made distinct both from the cosmos and from the claim to be its maker. I have asked whether our theology demolishes this dichotomy between religious and non-religious discourse, and whether it turns back to rid us of that distinction by showing the self-proclaimed world of freedom and secularity as religious, superstitious and bound. I have suggested that theology involves saying that there must be no simple account of what modernity is, or culture is, or the world is. Theology is a series of duties. Amongst them is the duty of preventing the world from coming to any peace until its redeemer comes, and of replying to the world in compassion with that therapeutic statement that will serve as antidote to each specific self-inflicted injury.

This thesis has compared two events. In one the opponent of the Word of God puts his hand on us, locking us into a circuitry in which we can only ever repeat his action. It is an event that this opponent does not succeed in sustaining. The second is the event in which the God of Israel puts his hand on man and keeps it there, training and leading him into wider and more complex forms of action, so man can reply to God and freely be with him. The God of Israel brings man into being by himself initiating man's

responses. He plays Adam until Adam can, with God's assistance, play himself. This act does not merely go out from God, but also freely returns to him in response, in a self-sustaining exchange. It creates a time of its own which cannot be interrupted by any other, and so is eternal. The trinitarian community is the source of the community of Israel. It receives Israel again as a true performer of the life of the trinitarian community. The economy of the God of Israel therefore outlives the economy of the opponent. The former has eternal life, the latter does not. An account of the God of Israel must include an account of his opponents in order that it be an account of their defeat. The rival gods, the world, our mundane practices, time and modernity, must all feature in our account of the God who is for us.

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